FROM GIRLS TO ADULTS
少女から大人へ…
プチコミック
毎月24日発売
FOR SALE EVERY MONTH ON THE 24TH.

SYNOPSIS

YURI'S LOVE TOWARDS SUMIRE ONLY GETS STRONGER... EVEN THOUGH YURI THOUGHT SHE WAS PLENTY HAPPY EVEN WITH A ONE-SIDED LOVE, THERE CAME A TIME WHEN SHE REALIZED THAT THOSE FEELINGS WERE A LIE. YURI WAS WORRIED, WANTING TO BE RECOGNIZED BY SUMIRE, WANTING TO FALL IN LOVE, WANTING TO LOVE. AND THE ANSWER WHICH SUMIRE WOULD GIVE TO ONE SUCH AS HER WAS...!?

VOLUME 14 OF 'PETIT COMICS' BELOVED SERIALIZATION, "BARA NO TAME NI."

FLOWER COMICS

薔薇のために

14

吉村明美
AKEMI YOSHIMURA

フラワーコミックス
薔薇のために 14
吉村明美
小学館
FC 6844

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プチコミ フラワーコミックス

SYNOPSIS
YURI'S LOVE TOWARDS SUMIRE ONLY GETS STRONGER... EVEN THOUGH YURI THOUGHT SHE WAS PLENTY HAPPY EVEN WITH A ONE-SIDED LOVE, THERE CAME A TIME WHEN SHE REALIZED THAT THAT FEELINGS WAS A LIE. YURI HAD BEGUN TO THINK SHE WANTED TO BE LOVED BY SUMIRE.

AKEMI YOSHIMURA @ FC

BARA NO TAME NI ①～⑭
KIRINKAN GRAFFITI, ALL 13 VOL
KIRINKAN GRAFFITI, SPINOFF
● THE AKEMI YOSHIMURA COLLECTION
① SNOW BALLAD
② I WANT TO HOLD YOU TIGHT
③ "INTO THE NIGHT..."
④ THE LAST MESSAGE
● FLOWER COMICS SPECIAL
STATION

AKEMI YOSHIMURA'S PROFILE

♥ BORN MARCH 5TH, A PISCES. BLOOD TYPE O. BORN IN NAGASAKI, RAISED IN YOKOHAMA, CURRENTLY LIVING IN SAPPORO.

♥ SHE MADE HER DEBUT AT PETIT COMICS IN OCTOBER 1980 WITH "MACHIBOUKE HANA". FOR "BARA NO TAME NI", SHE WAS PRESENTED WITH THE 39TH SHOUGAKUKAN MANGA AWARD.

♥ SHE ADORES CATS. AT THE MOMENT, SHE PASSES HER DAYS PLAYING WITH THREE OF THEM...

♥ CURRENTLY ACTIVE AT PETIT COMICS!

"BARA NO TAME Ni"
(FOR THE ROSE)

薔薇のために

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吉村明美

AKEMi YOSHiMURA

＊プチコミフラワーコミックス＊

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Bara no Tame ni
(For The Rose)

14

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WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

MAKURANO YURI, SEPARATED FROM HER GRANDMOTHER BY DEATH, BEGAN LIFE WITH HER MOTHER AND HALF-SIBLINGS IN THE HANAYASHIKI HOUSE IN SAPPORO. WITH MOTHER SHOUKO AT THE HEAD, ALL OF THE FAMILY HAD EXTREMELY GOOD LOOKS AND POSSESSED VERY STRONG CHARACTERS. BEFORE LONG, YURI CHERISHED FEELINGS OF LOVE FOR HER OLDER BROTHER, SUMIRE. HOWEVER, YURI LEARNED THAT SHE WAS NOT SHOUKO'S DAUGHTER. AS IT WAS, YURI GOT TO STAY IN THE HANAYASHIKI HOUSEHOLD, BUT SEEING SUMIRE EVERY DAY ONLY MADE HER FEELINGS TOWARD HIM GROW STRONGER. SUMIRE EVEN NOW LOVED HIS DEAD LOVER SERI, BUT GRADUALLY HE BEGAN TO HOLD SPECIAL FEELINGS FOR YURI. YURI THOUGHT SHE WAS FINE WITH AN UNREQUITED LOVE, BUT SHE CAME TO REALIZE THAT FEELING WAS A LIE...

* FOR THE FULL STORY, PLEASE REFER TO VOLUMES 1-13 OF "BARA NO TAME NI."

SCANNED BY RPARO

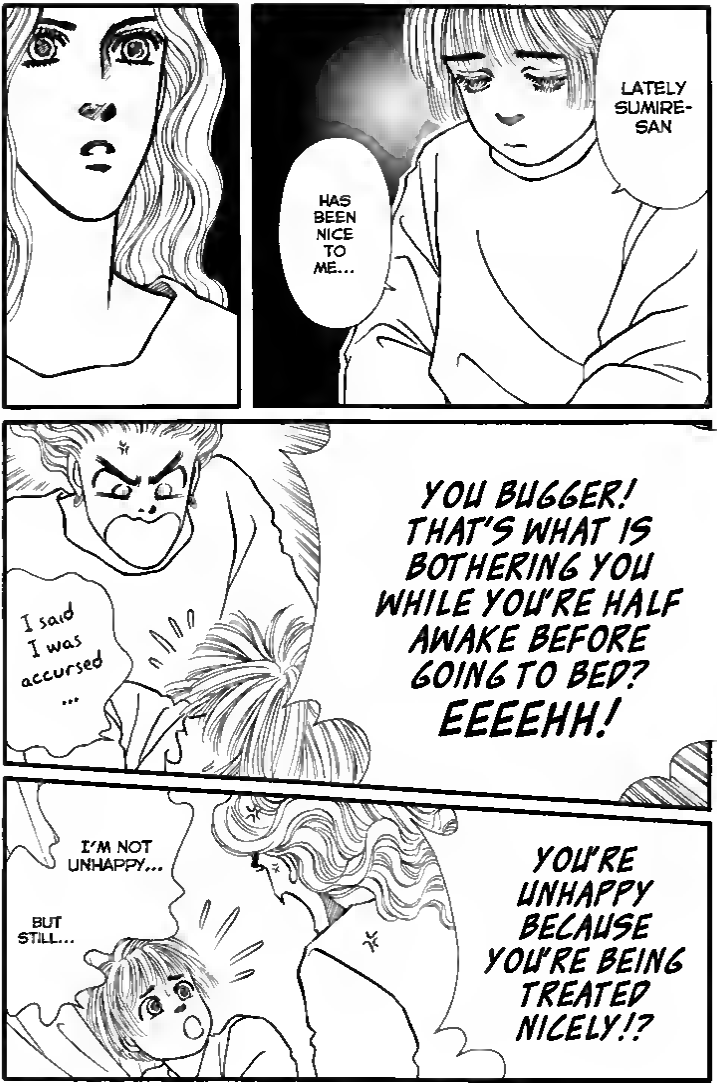
CHAPTER 53
LITTLE BIRD, RED BIRD

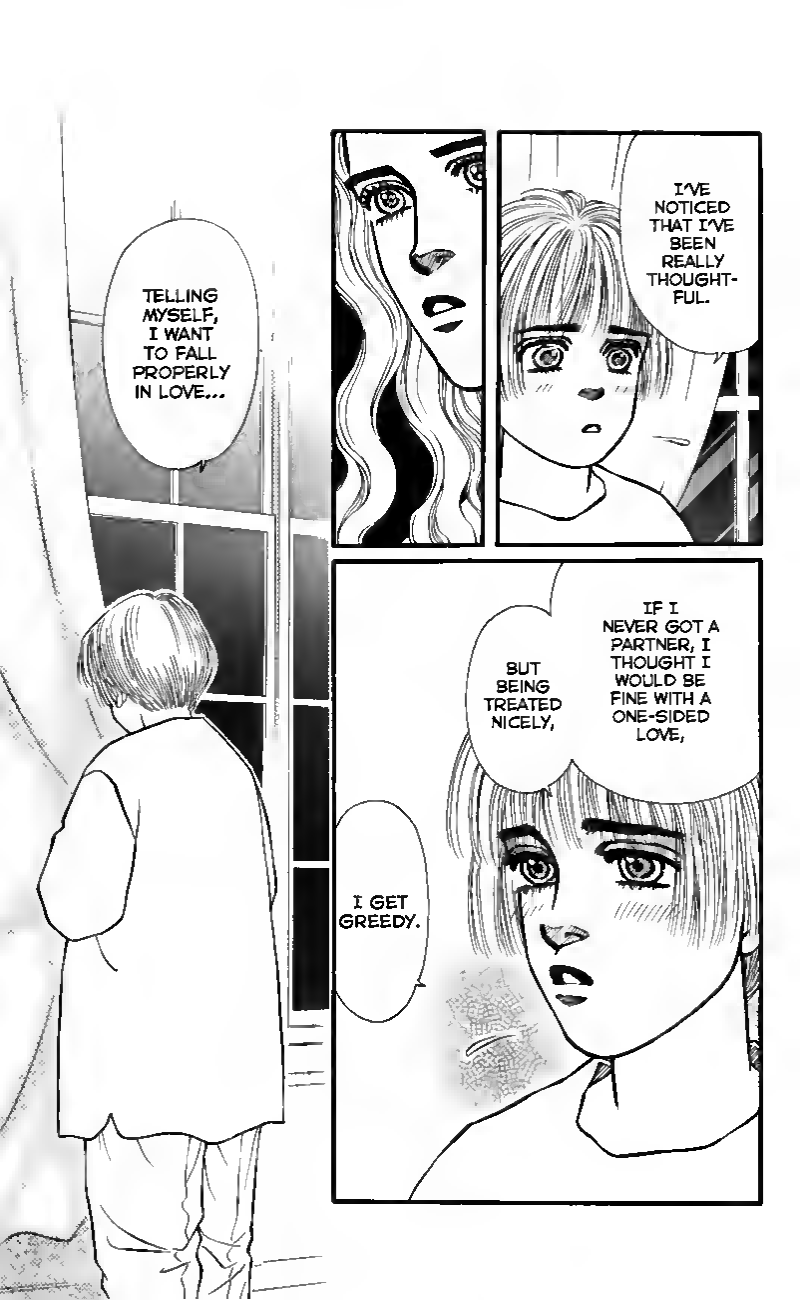
YURI-CHAAN
Autumn came to Sapporo.
YE-ES

I've gotten fat again, I have.
In other words,
Fall with it's blue sky and fattened horses came.
THE OLD HOUSE-KEEPER SAYS TO HELP WITH THE CLEANING.
YE-ES
SFX: LET'S GET MOVING
Housekeeping is really hard, physical work,
so why do I get fat?

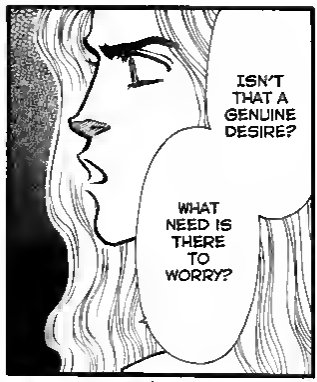
I CAN'T LET THEM GO TO WASTE,
THE MEALS ARE SO DELICIOUS,
SO I'M ALWAYS A GLUTTON.
If I know that, then why have I eaten it?
I'VE DECIDED IT'S BECAUSE THERE'S SO MUCH TO EAT!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING BY YOURSELF?
WAAA AAAH-HHH
SHUT UP!
YOU'RE WORKING ON AN EMPTY STOMACH.
In other words, that's it.

IS THERE SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU SO MUCH?
NOT PARTICU-LARLY...
I am simply burying the cracks in my heart with food.
AT ANY RATE, I'M ANGRY AT MY BINGE EATING!
THERE IS ALWAYS ONE WHO IS ACCURSED.
GO ON.


LATELY SUMIRE-SAN
HAS BEEN NICE TO ME...
YOU BUGGER! THAT'S WHAT IS BOTHERING YOU WHILE YOU'RE HALF AWAKE BEFORE GOING TO BED? EEEEHH!
I said I was accursed ...
YOU'RE UNHAPPY BECAUSE YOU'RE BEING TREATED NICELY!?
I'M NOT UNHAPPY...
BUT STILL...

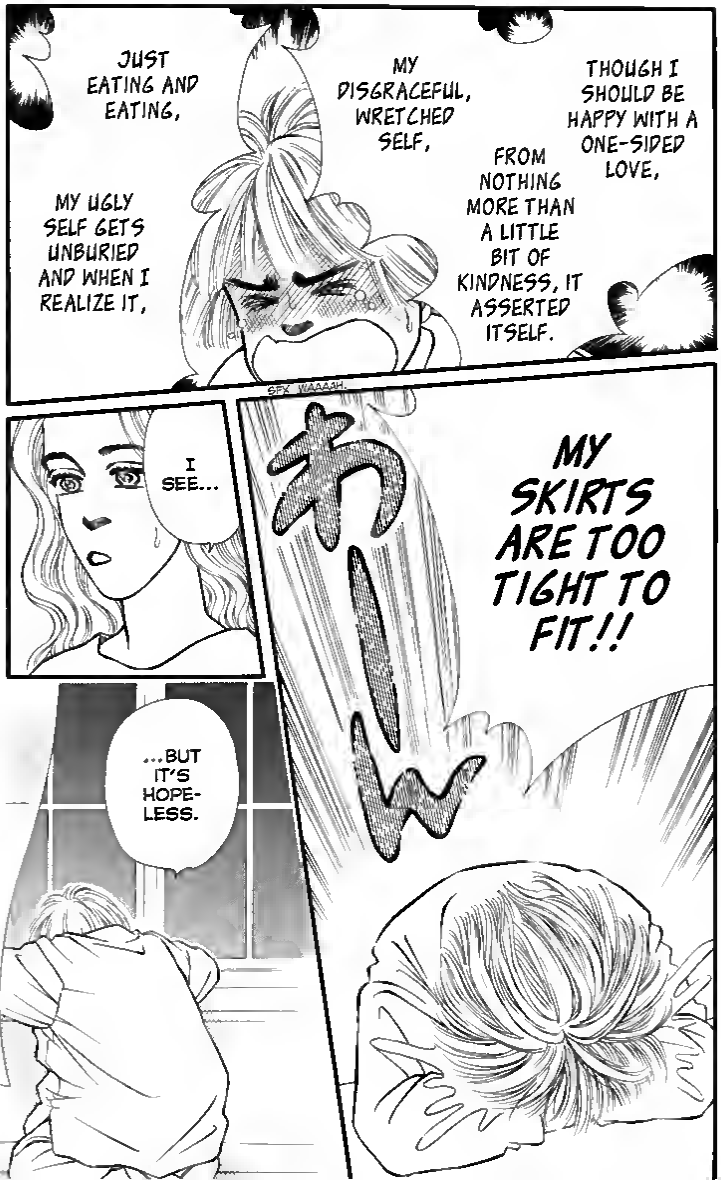

I'VE NOTICED THAT I'VE BEEN REALLY THOUGHT-FUL.
IF I NEVER GOT A PARTNER, I THOUGHT I WOULD BE FINE WITH A ONE-SIDED LOVE,
BUT BEING TREATED NICELY,
I GET GREEDY.
TELLING MYSELF, I WANT TO FALL PROPERLY IN LOVE...

BUT I DO!
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT, MY HEAD HURTS!

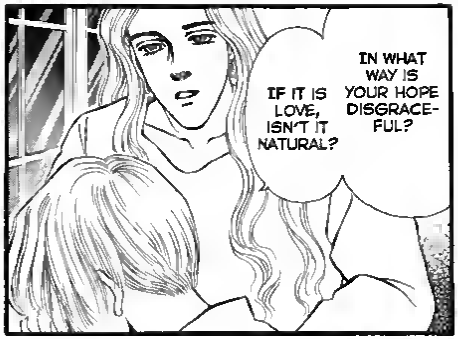

ISN'T THAT A GENUINE DESIRE?
WHAT NEED IS THERE TO WORRY?

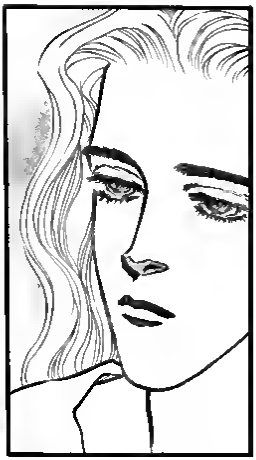
I NEVER THOUGHT I WANTED TO BE LOVED MORE THAN SERI-SAN,
HE COULD LOVE ME THE WAY THINGS ARE!
JUST ORDINARY ME
NOT SOME-BODY ELSE.
I WANT HIM TO RECOGNIZE ME PROPERLY AND LOVE ME.

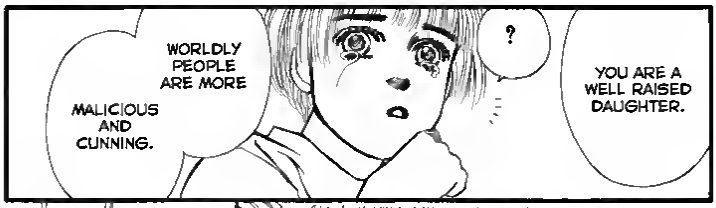
Gah!
LOVE SOMEBODY SO UGLY...?
AND THINKING THAT FAR, I SUDDENLY COME BACK TO MYSELF
WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD SUMIRE-SAN

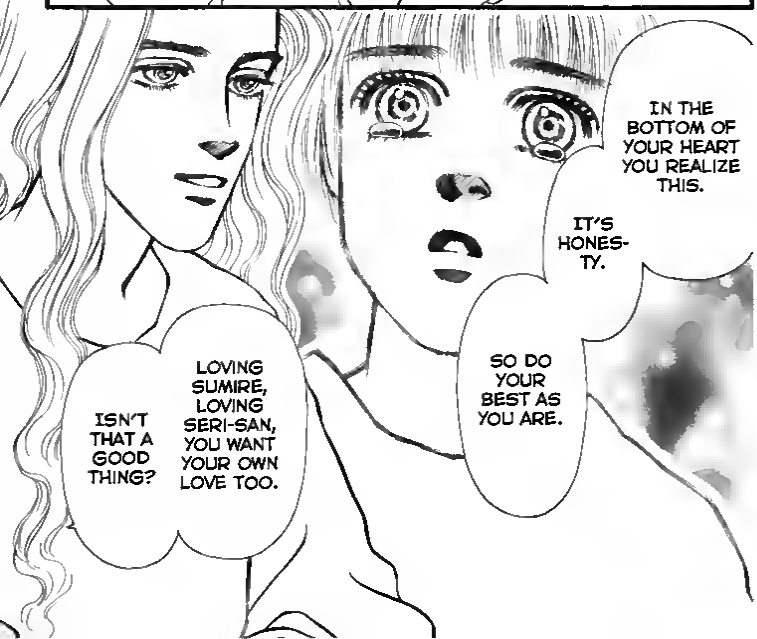

JUST EATING AND EATING,
MY UGLY SELF GETS UNBURIED AND WHEN I REALIZE IT,
MY DISGRACEFUL, WRETCHED SELF,
FROM NOTHING MORE THAN A LITTLE BIT OF KINDNESS, IT ASSERTED ITSELF.
THOUGH I SHOULD BE HAPPY WITH A ONE-SIDED LOVE,
SFX WAAAAH
I SEE...
MY SKIRTS ARE TOO TIGHT TO FIT!!
...BUT IT'S HOPE-LESS.

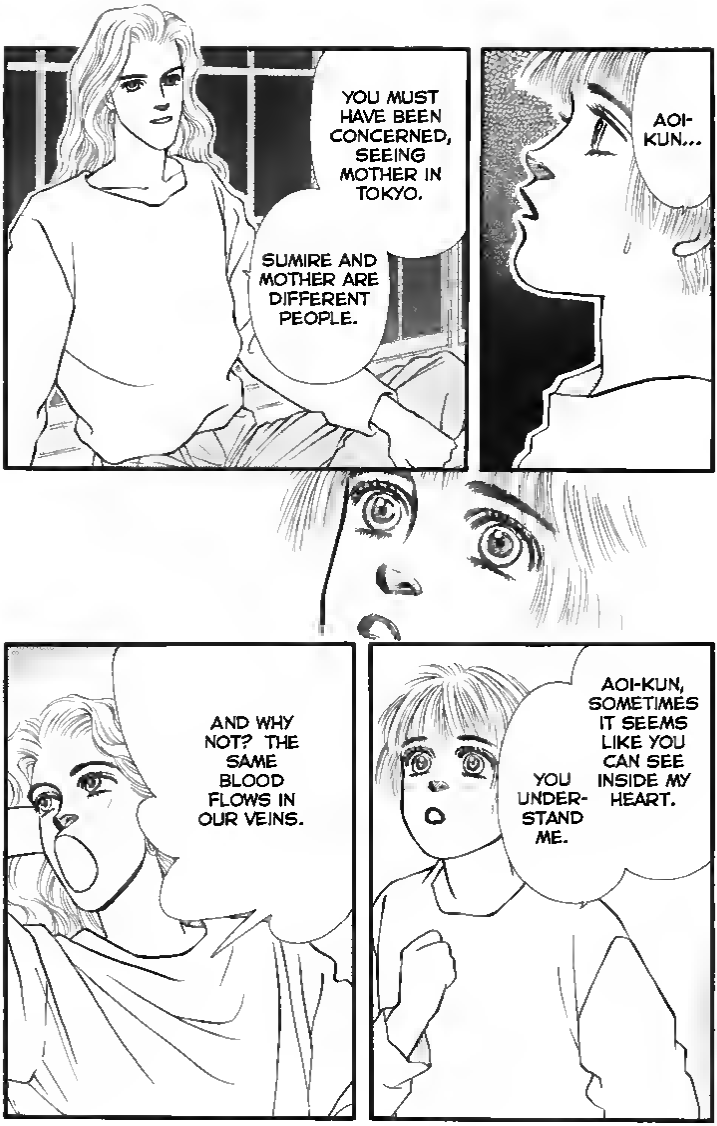
DESIRES I ONCE HELD, EVEN THOUGH I SET THEM ASIDE,
HAVE BEEN FORCED OUT...
I CAN NO LONGER THINK OF BEING HAPPY WITH A ONE-SIDED LOVE.
I WANT TO BE LOVED AS ONE SHOULD BE.

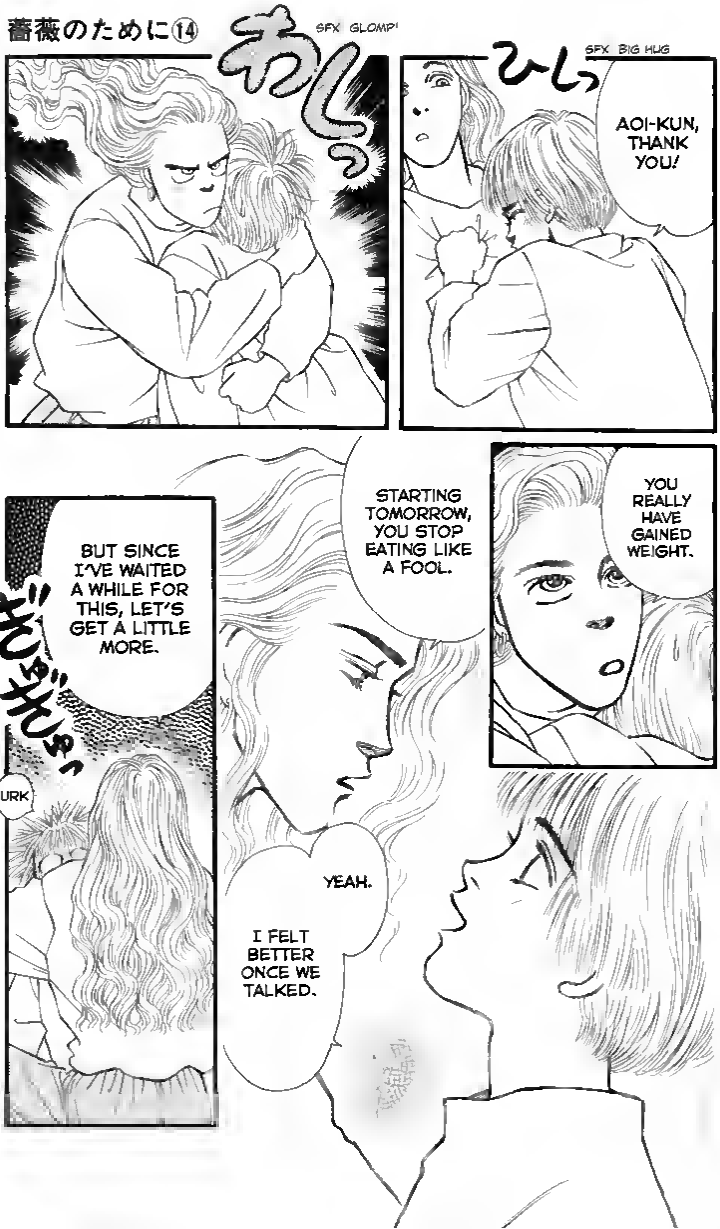

IF IT IS LOVE, ISN'T IT NATURAL?
IN WHAT WAY IS YOUR HOPE DISGRACE-FUL?

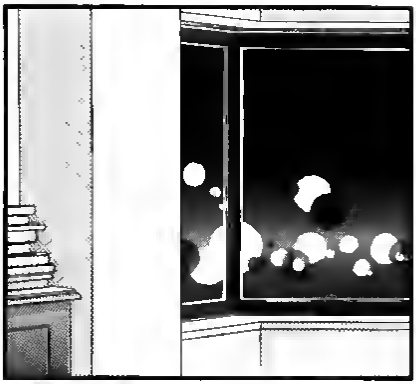



WORLDLY PEOPLE ARE MORE MALICIOUS AND CUNNING.
?
YOU ARE A WELL RAISED DAUGHTER.


IN THE BOTTOM OF YOUR HEART YOU REALIZE THIS.
IT'S HONES-TY.
SO DO YOUR BEST AS YOU ARE.
LOVING SUMIRE, LOVING SERI-SAN, YOU WANT YOUR OWN LOVE TOO.
ISN'T THAT A GOOD THING?

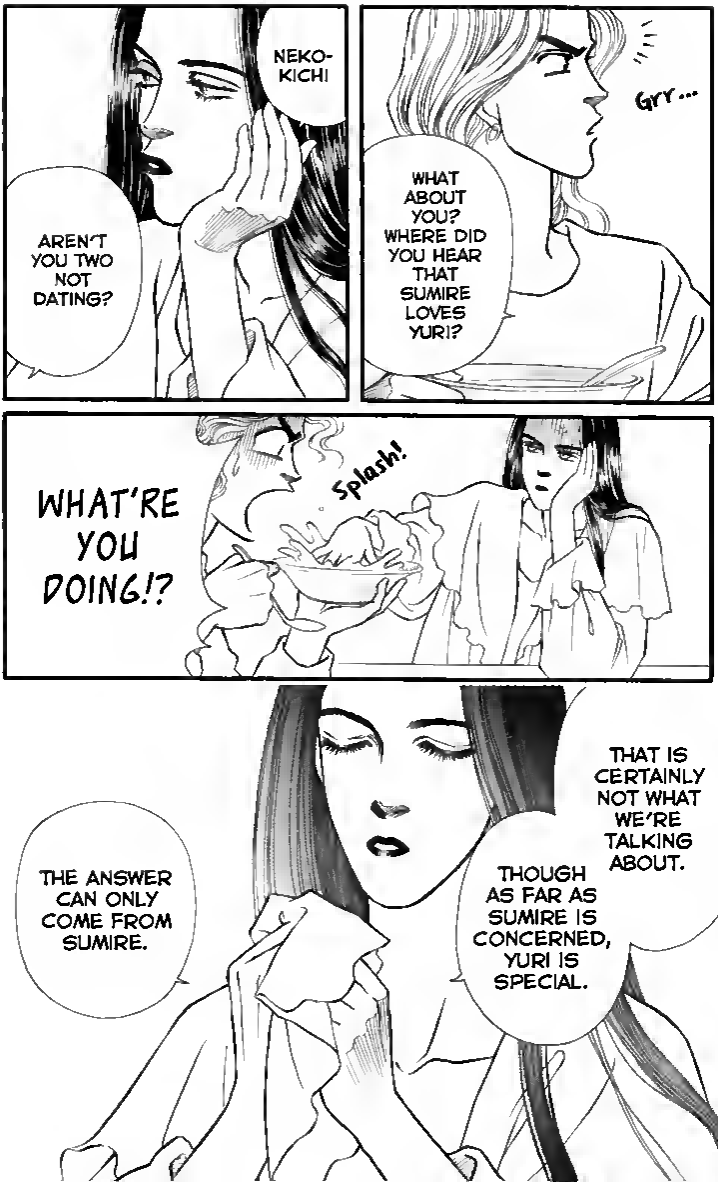

YOU MUST HAVE BEEN CONCERNED, SEEING MOTHER IN TOKYO.
SUMIRE AND MOTHER ARE DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
AOI-KUN...
AND WHY NOT? THE SAME BLOOD FLOWS IN OUR VEINS.
AOI-KUN, SOMETIMES IT SEEMS LIKE YOU CAN SEE INSIDE MY HEART.
YOU UNDER-STAND ME.

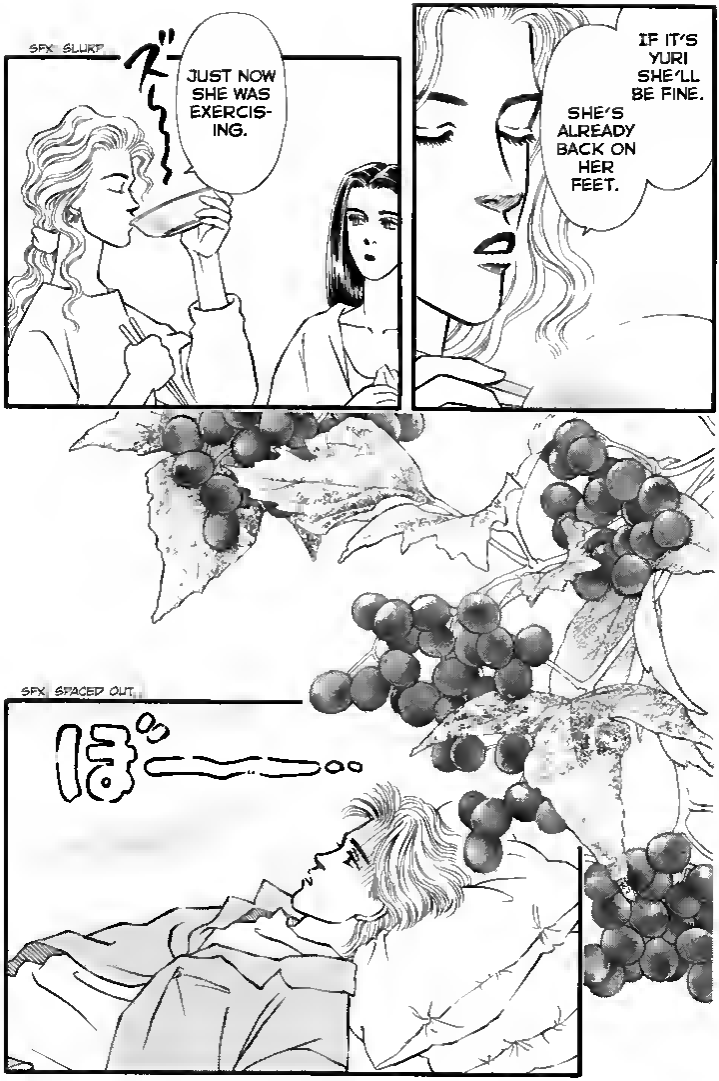

SFX: GLOMP!
SFX: BIG HUG
AOI-KUN, THANK YOU!
YOU REALLY HAVE GAINED WEIGHT.
STARTING TOMORROW, YOU STOP EATING LIKE A FOOL.
YEAH.
I FELT BETTER ONCE WE TALKED.
BUT SINCE I'VE WAITED A WHILE FOR THIS, LET'S GET A LITTLE MORE.
SFX: SQUEEZE
URK



SFX: SPACED OUT...

chomp chomp chomp
YOU DIDN'T CRUSH YURI-CHAN HUGGING HER LAST NIGHT?
HOW'D YOU KNOW?
I COULD HEAR IT FROM THE HALLWAY.
WHY DON'T YOU TELL YURI-CHAN THAT SUMIRE LOVES HER TOO?
BECAUSE HUMAN BEINGS CAN'T GO THAT FAR.


NEKO-KICHI
AREN'T YOU TWO NOT DATING?
Grr...
WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHERE DID YOU HEAR THAT SUMIRE LOVES YURI?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?
Splash!
THAT IS CERTAINLY NOT WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.
THOUGH AS FAR AS SUMIRE IS CONCERNED, YURI IS SPECIAL.
THE ANSWER CAN ONLY COME FROM SUMIRE.


SFX: SLURP
ズー
JUST NOW SHE WAS EXERCISING.
IF IT'S YURI SHE'LL BE FINE.
SHE'S ALREADY BACK ON HER FEET.
SFX: SPACED OUT
ぼーーーーーー

ALL RIGHT NOW.
I'M BACK TO MY WEIGHT FROM A WEEK BEFORE I PIGGED OUT.
SINCE I'VE ONLY RETURNED TO MY NORMAL CHUBBINESS.
I CAN'T BE HAPPY WITH THIS.
IT'S SHOCKING THIS IS ALWAYS FAT.
Squeeze...
THE PROBLEM IS THIS STOMACH.
Chubby

I'VE SUCCEEDED IN HAVING A BUTT
BOTH IN FRONT OF MY BODY AND BEHIND
OH, IT LOOKS LIKE A BUTT!
THIS IS A SALMON.
THIS IS A DUMPLING.
swollen
IS THIS THE TIME TO BE PLAYING WITH ONE'S OWN BODY!?
THIS IS AN EBISEN.
.....

EBISEN: A SNACK THAT LOOKS LIKE FRENCH FRIES

Zzzz...
Eh...?

AOI-KUN! GO SLEEP IN YOUR OWN BED...
AGAIN ~?
あわ
あわ
あわ
あわ
THIS IS SUMIRE-SAN!!

SFX PANIC

SFX: BADUMP!
ドキン!
YOU'RE HIGHLY NUTRI-TIOUS.
THAT'S 100% MEAT!
WHAT AM I SAYING!?

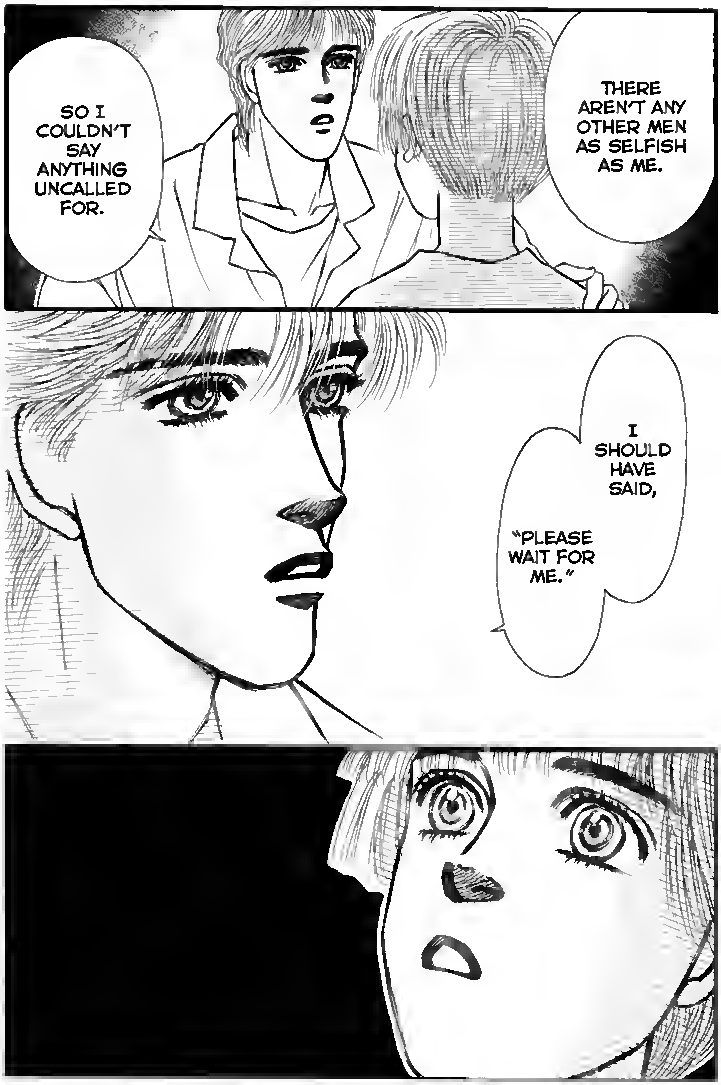
YES.
TO CLEAN WHILE YOU WERE OUT.
click
DID YOU COME TO MY PLACE THIS WEEK?
LAST WEEK?
LAST WEEK TOO.
...WHAT'S WRONG?
LATELY I HAVEN'T BEEN FEELING TOO WELL.
WHERE ARE YOU SICK!?

EH!?
IT SEEMS TO BE BECAUSE I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU THE WHOLE TIME.
AND WHEN I SAW YOUR FACE, I GOT BETTER.

JUST SEEING YOU HELPS!
YOU'RE INCREDI-BLE.
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HEAR SOMETHING LIKE THAT FROM YOU, SUMIRE-SAN...
I'M HAPPYYY...!
WHAT THE? WHAT'S WRONG?

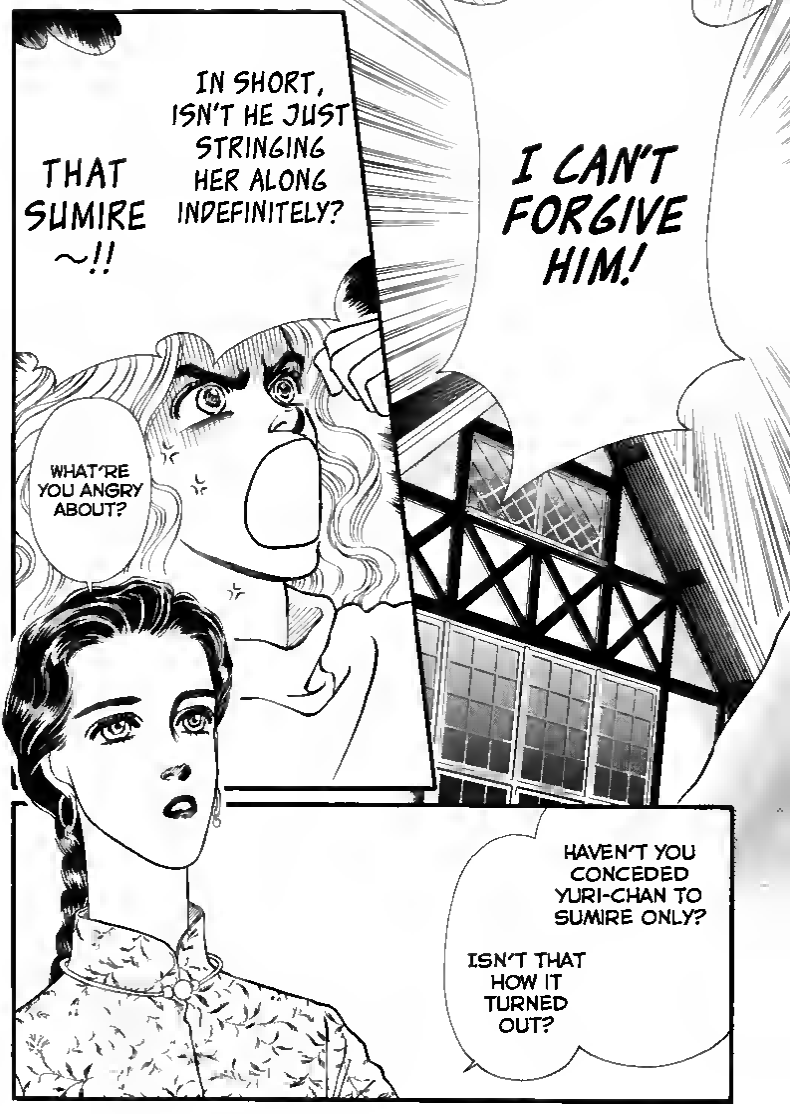
YOU SEE,
HAVING A ONE-SIDED LOVE HAS GOTTEN HARDER FOR ME.
AND YET, SAYING SOMETHING AS SELF-IMPORTANT AS THAT,
MY SELF-CONFIDENCE HAS SUDDENLY TURNED TO NOTHING.
YURI?
IT'S COME TO BE AS IF I'D SAID,
"I CAN BE THE NEXT SERI-SAN, SO LOOK AT ME!"
I've said it, but...
I'VE BEEN A REALLY BAD PERSON...!

YURI...
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU'VE GOTTEN UNEASY.
EH?
BUT I'M OKAY ALREADY!
SUDDENLY I'M FEELING GOOD!
I'VE RECOVERED COMPLETELY!!


SO I COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING UNCALLED FOR.
THERE AREN'T ANY OTHER MEN AS SELFISH AS ME.
I SHOULD HAVE SAID,
"PLEASE WAIT FOR ME."

I WANT TO WAIT
FOR YOU.

I'M HAPPY
I'M HAPPY
I'M HAPPY


I CAN'T FORGIVE HIM!
IN SHORT, ISN'T HE JUST STRINGING HER ALONG INDEFINITELY?
THAT SUMIRE ~!!
WHAT'RE YOU ANGRY ABOUT?
HAVEN'T YOU CONCEDED YURI-CHAN TO SUMIRE ONLY?
ISN'T THAT HOW IT TURNED OUT?

AREN'T YOU GETTING AHEAD OF YOURSELF?
NO IT DIDN'T! ISN'T SHE SIMPLY RESERVED!?
YOU ARE SURE HOLDING ON TO A LOT OF REGRET.
BURNING WITH JEALOUSY IS NOT GOOD, EITHER.
WELL I'M SORRY!
WHAT'S MY COMPLICATED MENTAL STATE TO YOU?
WHERE DID YURI GET OFF TO!?
SHE'S IN THE GARDEN WITH SUMIRE.

AH, A LITTLE BIRD!

IT'S RED.
OH! IT'S GOTTEN AWAY.
IT'S A ROSE-FINCH. THEY'RE RARE.
WOW
A RED BIRD.
THEY REALLY EXIST.
I WAS RAISED IN TOKYO,
SO APART FROM WHAT WAS FOR SALE IN STORES,
I KNEW NOTHING BUT PIGEONS, SPARROWS AND CROWS.
It flew into the sky
THEN I WONDER IF THEY'RE EATING RED FRUITS AFTER ALL...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "AFTER ALL"?

A CHILDREN'S SONG I HEARD LONG, LONG AGO.
"Little bird, red bird Why oh why so red? Because it ate a red fruit"
IT GOES LIKE THAT.
IT'S CUTE. I'VE WANTED TO SEE IT.
YURI
WHY HAVEN'T YOU BEEN LOOKING MY WAY FOR A WHILE NOW?
EH...

SFX: ON FIRE
ごおお…
YOU'RE ALL RED.
ISN'T THERE THE JAPANESE ROWAN, AFTER ALL!?
I WAS ABOUT TO SAY THERE ARE RED FRUIT IN SAPPORO.
WELL...
THAT...
Completely Flustered
THAT SONG JUST NOW,
SHOW IT TO ME ONE MORE TIME.
EH...
YOU MEAN,
'WHAT THE LITTLE BIRD ATE'?

Little Bird...
.....

SUMIRE!

I SAW.
CLEARLY, SHE HASN'T FALLEN FOR MY LOVE.
THAT WASN'T JUST A LIGHT KISS.
NO, IT WASN'T.

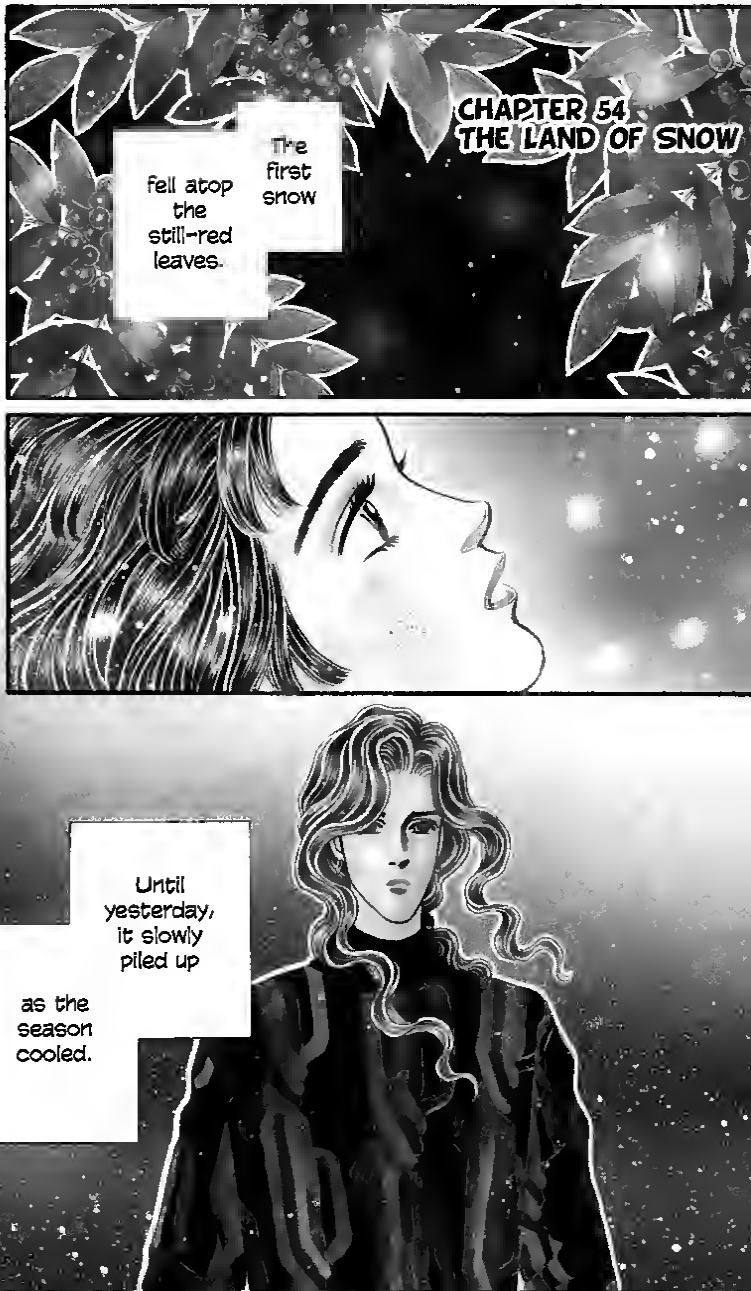
CHAPTER 53 - LITTLE BIRD, RED BIRD - THE END

Oh Dear!

Part One

Although no one takes me seriously when I say so, the truth is that I don't know how to use a television. It's the truth. For at least these past fifteen years, I switch on the television, but I haven't once gotten a proper image. I don't even know how many channels there are. For example, I can't tell whether the topic is a commercial, an idol or a talk show about celebrities, since I have never seen them. Despite this, I am always hearing about things related to television in the letters you readers send me. I don't know nuttin' at all, nuttin about what dey're talkin' 'bout. And on top of that, it's not uncommon for me not to leave my house for a whole month, not buy any magazines, nor even see any people. If I start reading a newspaper, I lose my will to work, so I don't remember the last time I touched one. In this, I no longer participate in human activities. You all could say I'm a hermit: Yumanba, the old hag of the mountains. Unknowing of news or machines. Forgive me. That's how it is.

THANKS TO GREEN MORIYAMA FOR SOME VERY GOOD HINTS AS TO HOW TO TRANSLATE THIS.

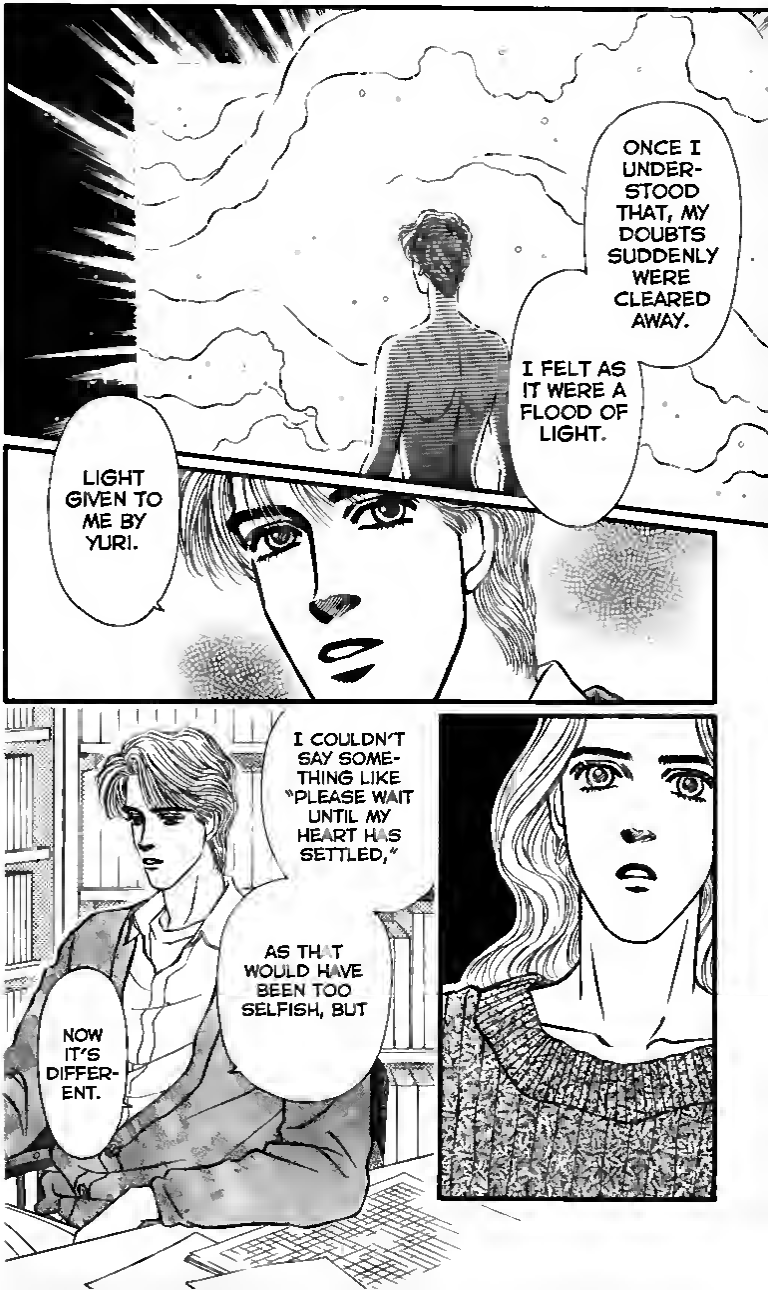

CHAPTER 54
THE LAND OF SNOW
The first snow
fell atop the still-red leaves.
Until yesterday, it slowly piled up
as the season cooled.

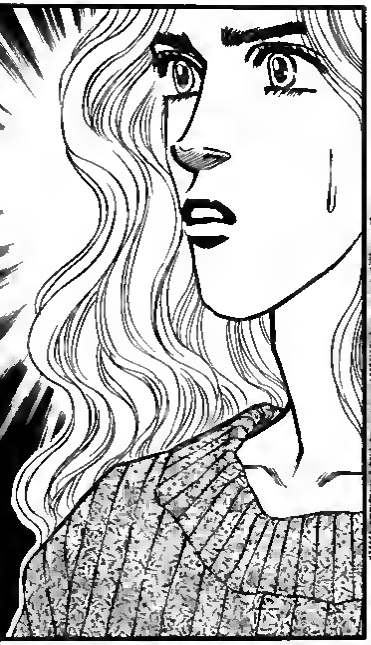
CHAPTER 54
THE LAND OF SNOW
SCANLATION BY RPAPO

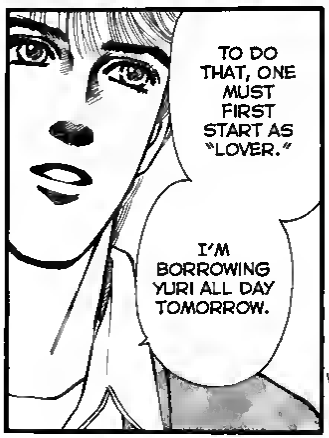
EH?
MAKE YOURSELF CLEAR.

WHAT DID YOU MEAN WHEN YOU ASKED YURI TO "WAIT FOR ME?"
YOU WEREN'T TELLING HER TO WAIT UNTIL YOU COULD FORGET SERI-SAN.
YURI WILL BE AN OLD CRONE BY THEN.
THE DAY I AM ABLE TO FORGET SERI WON'T COME IN THIS LIFE.
AT FIRST I WAS CONCERNED OVER THAT.
YURI TAUGHT ME.
MUST YOU THROW AWAY THE SERI-SAN IN ME!?

WHEN I TRULY UNDER-STOOD THE MEANING OF THOSE WORDS,
I WAS SAVED.
FROM NOW ON WE CAN LOVE SERI, YURI AND I.
AND THEN,
SERI AND I WILL BE ABLE TO LOVE
THAT LITTLE YURI WITH AS MUCH CARE AS SHE NEEDS.

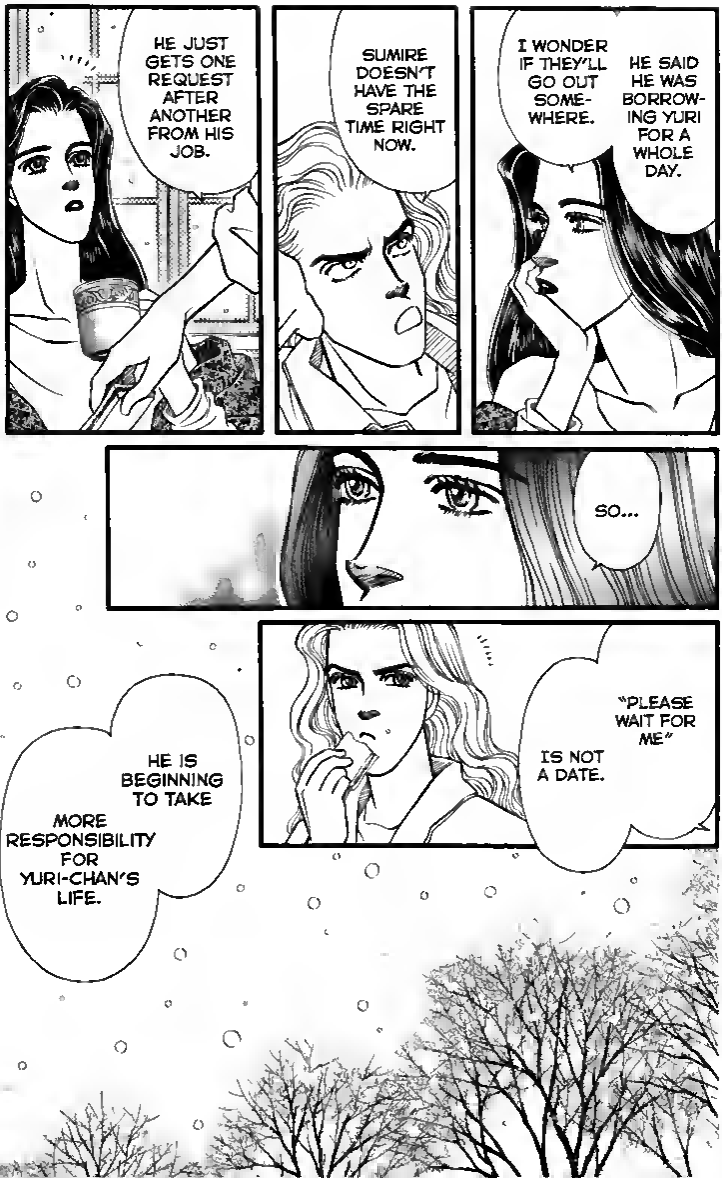

ONCE I UNDERSTOOD THAT, MY DOUBTS SUDDENLY WERE CLEARED AWAY.
I FELT AS IT WERE A FLOOD OF LIGHT.
LIGHT GIVEN TO ME BY YURI.
I COULDN'T SAY SOMETHING LIKE "PLEASE WAIT UNTIL MY HEART HAS SETTLED,"
AS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO SELFISH, BUT
NOW IT'S DIFFERENT.




TO DO THAT, ONE MUST FIRST START AS "LOVER."
I'M BORROWING YURI ALL DAY TOMORROW.

ALL I WANT IS YURI.
"PLEASE WAIT UNTIL THE DAY I PROPOSE,"
IS WHAT I MEANT.

THAT CONVINCED YOU?
I CAN'T SEE IT AT ALL IN THE WAY YOU ARE.
I'M TRYING MY HARD-EST!!
ぷぷぷ
DO I HAVE ANY CHOICE!?
SFX: REALLY TICKED OFF—


HE JUST GETS ONE REQUEST AFTER ANOTHER FROM HIS JOB.
SUMIRE DOESN'T HAVE THE SPARE TIME RIGHT NOW.
I WONDER IF THEY'LL GO OUT SOMEWHERE.
HE SAID HE WAS BORROWING YURI FOR A WHOLE DAY.
SO...
"PLEASE WAIT FOR ME" IS NOT A DATE.
HE IS BEGINNING TO TAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YURI-CHAN'S LIFE.

YOU GOT A BUNCH OF FAXES...
OH... SORRY.
I'LL BE DONE FOR TODAY ONCE I FINISH WHAT I'M WRITING NOW.
SHALL WE GO EAT AFTER-WARDS?
WOW, THEY'RE ALL FROM DIFFERENT PUBLISHERS!
I HAD NO IDEA SO MUCH WORK WAS COMING YOUR WAY.

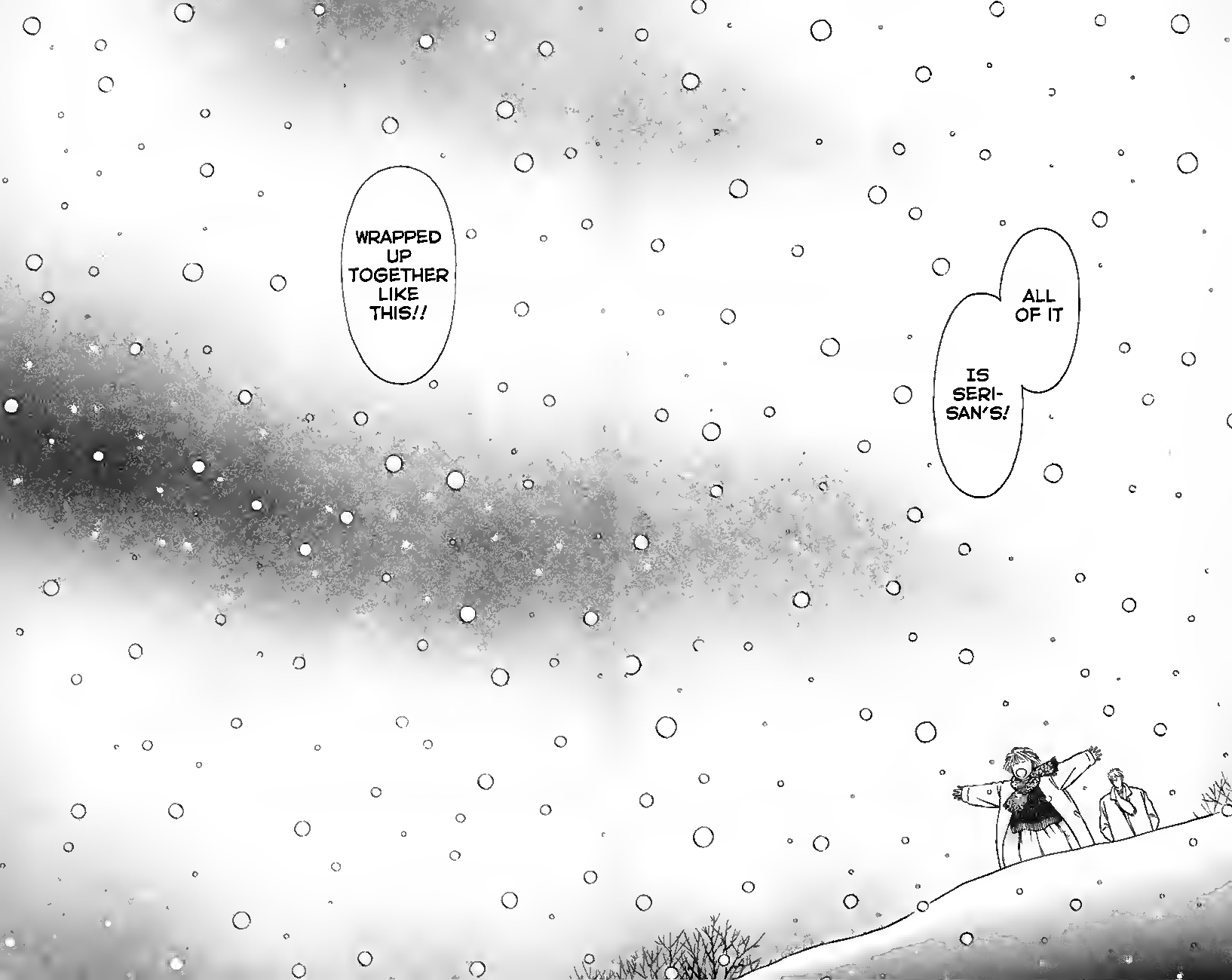
IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU?
ME BEING HERE?
YEAH! IF IT'S DINNER, I CAN MAKE IT!
HOW-EVER,
I WANTED YOU HERE, SO I CALLED YOU.
BECAUSE YOU ARE MY ENERGY SOURCE.

BUT WITH THIS SNOW WE CAN'T EVEN GO FOR A WALK.
A WALK!?
WITH Sumire-san!?
Let's go!
I want to go!
ALL RIGHT, GIVE ME AN HOUR.
I'LL GET THIS CLEARED UP RIGHT AWAY.
YEAH!

THE SNOW'S FALLING ON YOU,
AND YOU LOOK HAPPY FOR IT.

DOES IT LOOK LIKE IT!?
AREN'T YOU?
WELL, IN TOKYO
WE DIDN'T GET MUCH SNOW.
WHEN IT FALLS, IT GETS THICKER AND THICKER.
falling
WE GET ALL EXCITED.
YOU'RE FALLING.
CHANGE YOUR EXPRESSION.
WELL, EVEN THOUGH COLD COMES TO THIS REAL LAND OF SNOW, IT SURPRISES ME.
IT MOVES ME WHEN THE SNOW ARRIVES EVERY YEAR.

AND WHEN I SEE SNOW LIKE TODAY'S,
I FEEL SERI-SAN.
CHANGING THE FORM OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND GENTLE THINGS OF THIS WORLD
AND BROUGHT TO US BY SERI-SAN.
AND SO THE GREAT SPACE BETWEEN
THE EARTH AND THE SKY,


WRAPPED UP TOGETHER LIKE THIS!!
ALL OF IT IS SERI-SAN'S!

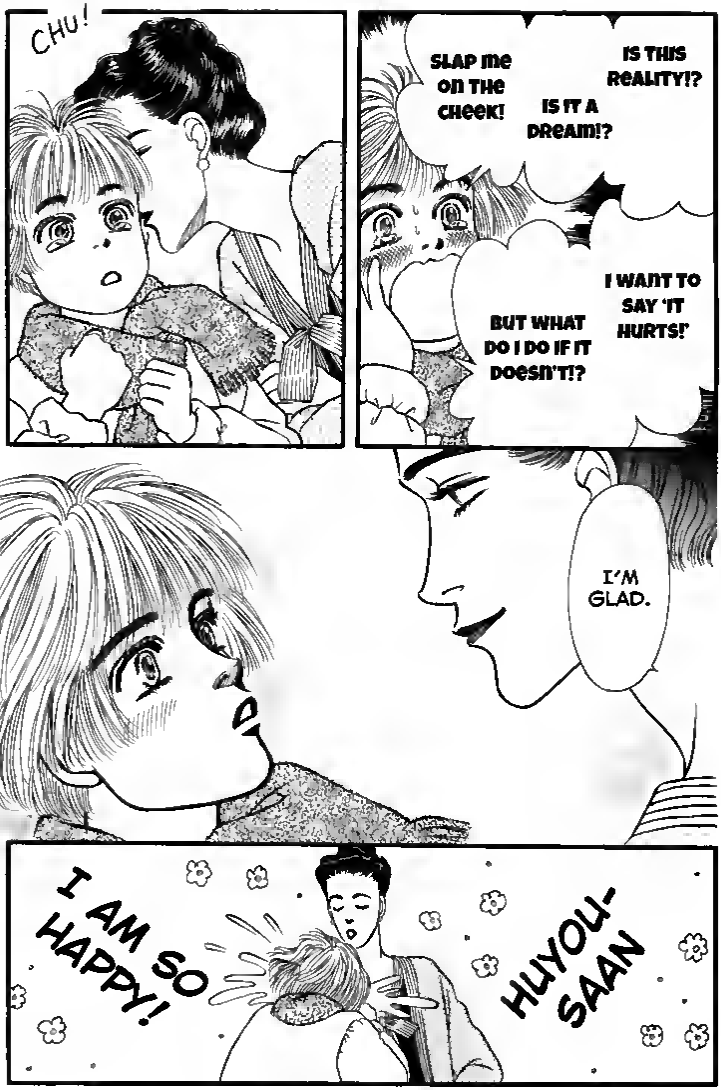
I LOVE YOU!
NOR EVEN AS FAMILY,
NOT AS MY LITTLE SISTER,
I LOVE YOU.
YURI...

YOU ARE MY ONLY LOVER.

SUMIRE HAS BROUGHT YURI-CHAN BACK.
Gasp!
WOULD YOU RATHER I SCREAM AND SHOUT?
WHAT'S WITH THAT LOOK?

In a daze...
OH, HOW YA DOING, MA'AM?
I'm doing fine.
A CUP OF TEA FOR ME.
WHERE ARE WE?
WHO AM I?
AT HOME.
MY OLDER SISTER.
YOU'VE POPPED QUITE A FEW SCREWS.

SFX: POOF!
ぽぉん
OOPS, SHE WOKE UP.
DID SUMIRE CONFESS TO YOU?
SFX: KABOOM!
どばーん
An Explosion of Joy


CHU!
SLAP me on the cheek!
IS IT A DREAM!?
IS THIS REALITY!?
I WANT TO SAY 'IT HURTS!'
BUT WHAT DO I DO IF IT DOESN'T!?
I'M GLAD.
I AM SO HAPPY!
HUYOU-SAAN

DIDN'T YOU HATE UGLY GIRLS!?
I DO.
THEN WHY YURI!?
YURI ISN'T UGLY.

I GUESS YOU WEREN'T KEEPING AN EYE ON ME.
LIAR! IN THE OLD DAYS YOU COMPLETE-LY...
BECAUSE I FELL IN LOVE WITH HER.
THAT ONE IS GOING TO BE AN AMAZING WOMAN.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?

WELL, JUST WATCH.

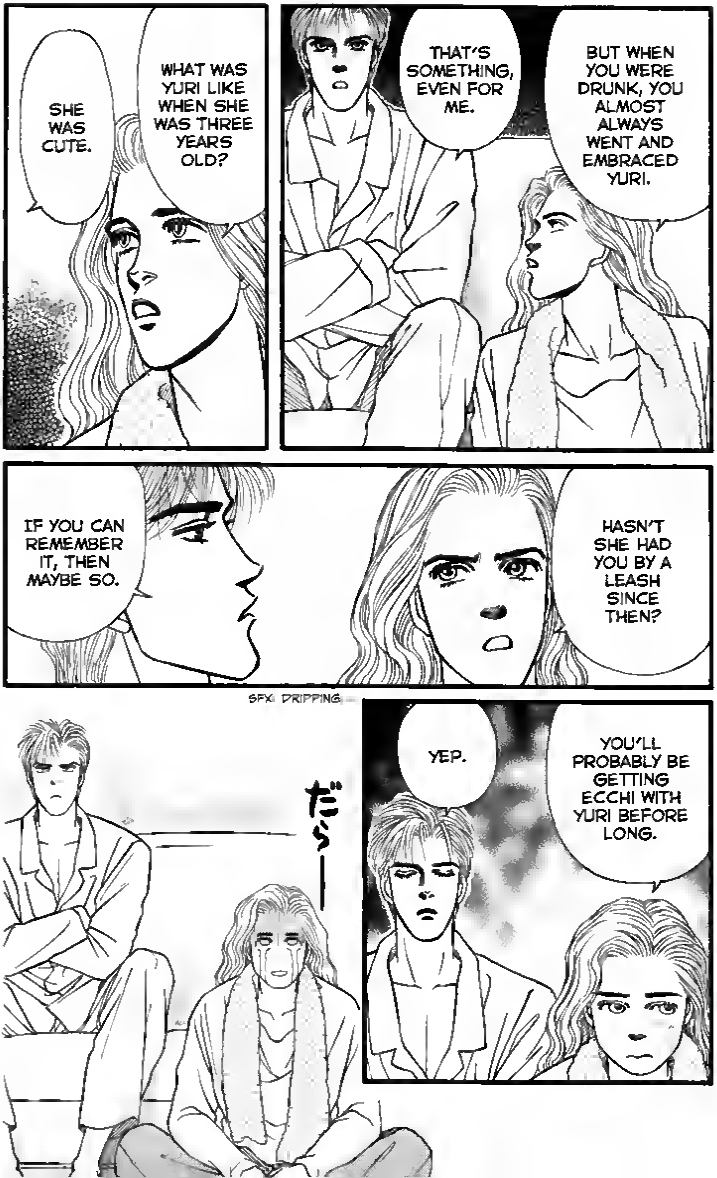
HOUSE-KEEPER-SAN, GOOD NIGHT...
SFX: BANG
ゴン！
ARE YOU OKAY?
I'M FINE, I'M FINE.
IS IT NOT ROSE COLORED BEFORE YOUR EYES?
SFX: BONK!
カン！

IS THERE ALREADY NOTHING I CAN DO...?

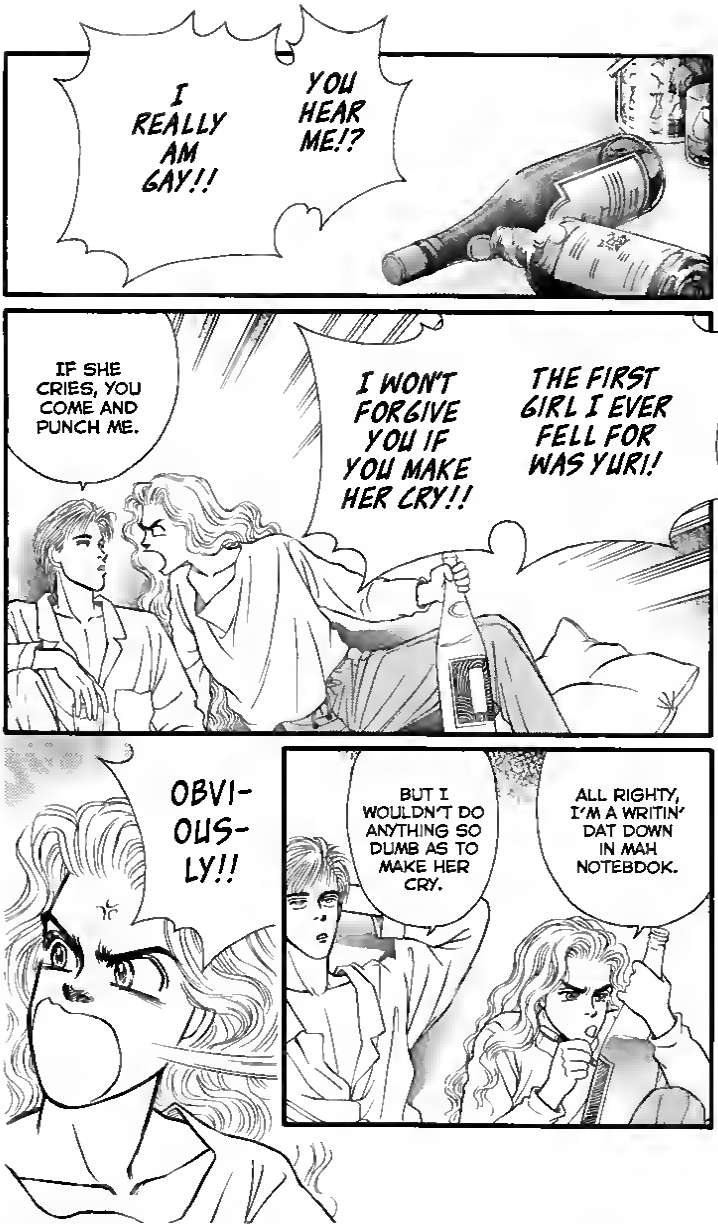
WHY HAVE YOU COME AGAIN?
SORRY ABOUT THIS. I'M STAYING THE NIGHT.
WHY?
BECAUSE IT SEEMS YURI BEAT ME TO SLEEP.

STUPID IDIOT! WOULD YOU REALLY DO THAT!?
SHALL I CONSOLE YOU?
ALL RIGHT, COME TO BED.
WHAT MONSTERS?
I FORGOT ABOUT THE MONSTERS.
MY BAD.

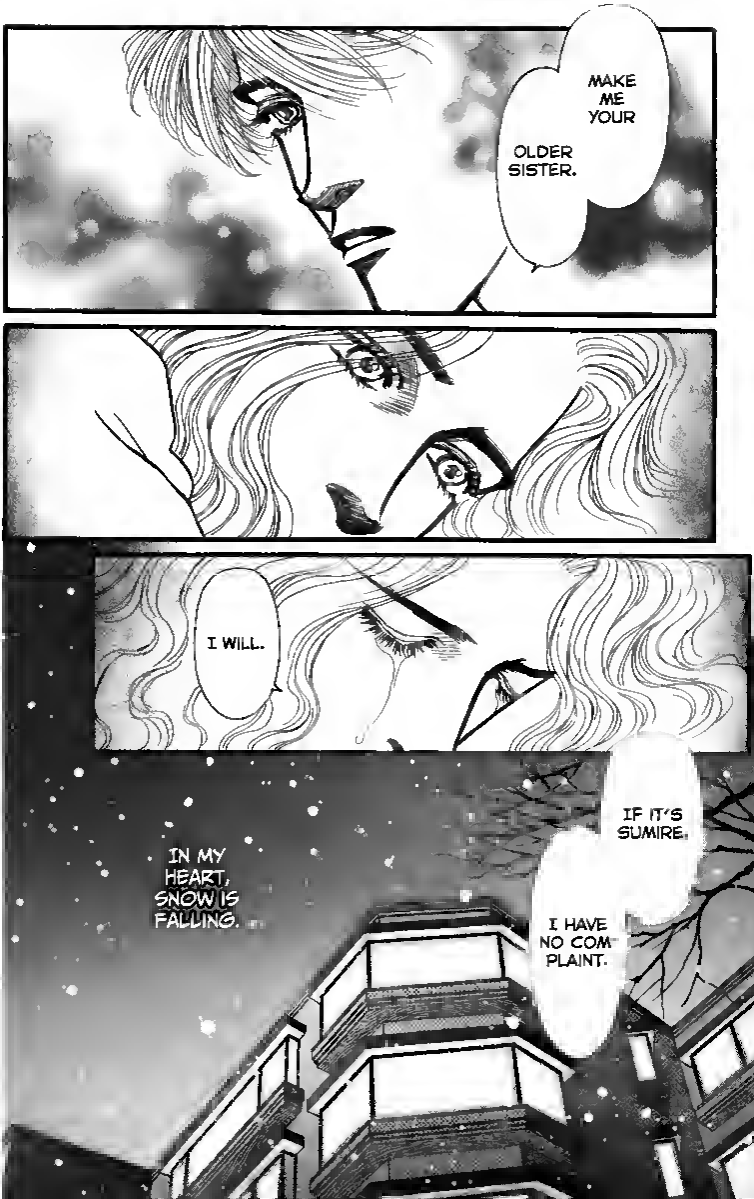
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU WERE IN LOVE WITH YURI FROM THE VERY START, WEREN'T YOU?
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT,
IT'S A SHAME I DON'T REMEMBER THAT.
WHEN I GET DRUNK, I FORGET EVERYTHING ENTIRELY.
THE NIGHT YURI ARRIVED IN SAPPORO SHE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN EIGHTEEN.
IT SEEMS YOU CONSOLED AND SLEPT WITH THE CRYING YURI THAT NIGHT TOO.


WHAT WAS YURI LIKE WHEN SHE WAS THREE YEARS OLD?
SHE WAS CUTE.
BUT WHEN YOU WERE DRUNK, YOU ALMOST ALWAYS WENT AND EMBRACED YURI.
THAT'S SOMETHING, EVEN FOR ME.
HASN'T SHE HAD YOU BY A LEASH SINCE THEN?
IF YOU CAN REMEMBER IT, THEN MAYBE SO.
SFX: DRIPPING
YOU'LL PROBABLY BE GETTING ECCHI WITH YURI BEFORE LONG.
YEP.
だら〜

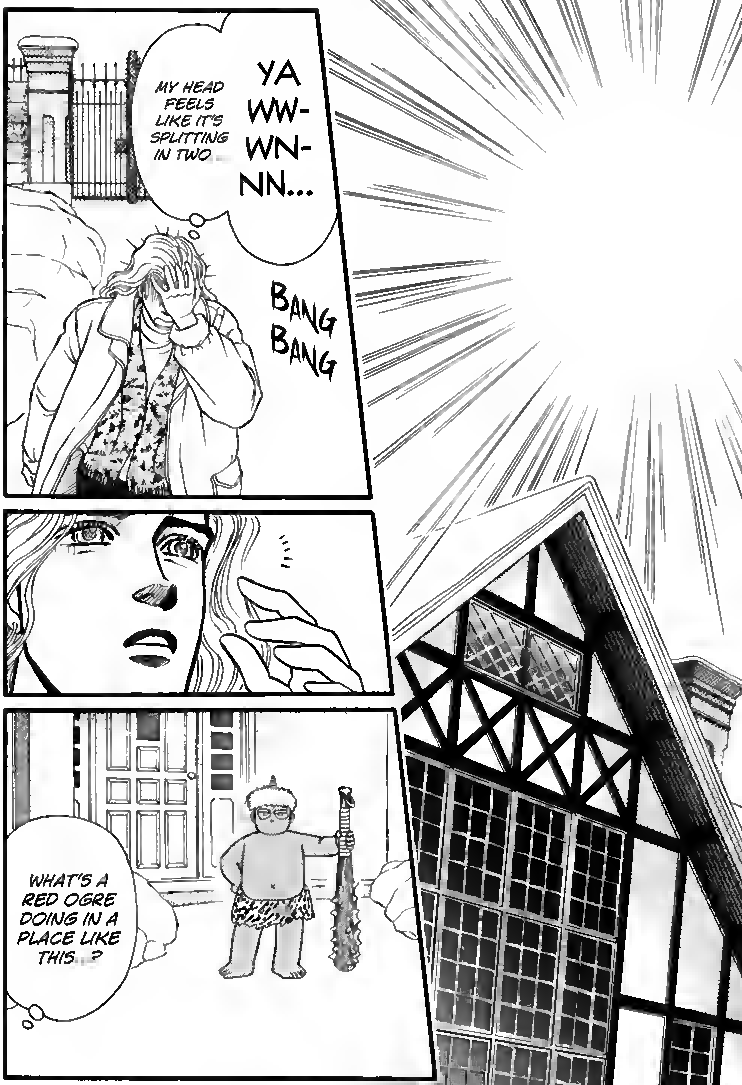
OH CRAP! I'M GONNA PIG OUT TONIGHT!!
WASN'T IT 'LET'S DRINK'?
IF WE GET DRUNK BEFORE WE EAT, WON'T WE HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING HUNGRY!!?
YOU FREAKIN' IDIOT!
WHERE IS THERE SOMETHING TO EAT IN THIS HOUSE!?
THERE'S NOT ENOUGH HERE FOR YOUR STOMACH.


I REALLY AM GAY!!
YOU HEAR ME!?
IF SHE CRIES, YOU COME AND PUNCH ME.
I WON'T FORGIVE YOU IF YOU MAKE HER CRY!!
THE FIRST GIRL I EVER FELL FOR WAS YURI!
OBVI-OUS-LY!!
BUT I WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING SO DUMB AS TO MAKE HER CRY.
ALL RIGHTY, I'M A WRITIN' DAT DOWN IN MAH NOTEBDOK.

WILL YOU TREAT YURI BETTER THAN A GUY LIKE ME WHO CANNOT MAKE HER HAPPY!?
SORRY, BUT I HAVE A HUNDRED TIMES MORE CONFIDENCE THAN YOU.
YOU SWEAR!?
I SWEAR.
...WHAT'S WITH THESE HANDS?
MUST BE BROTHERLY LOVE.
ARE YOU DRUNK?
YOU'RE DRUNK.
THIS FEELS NICE...
MAKE HER HAPPY.
DON'T MAKE HER CRY.

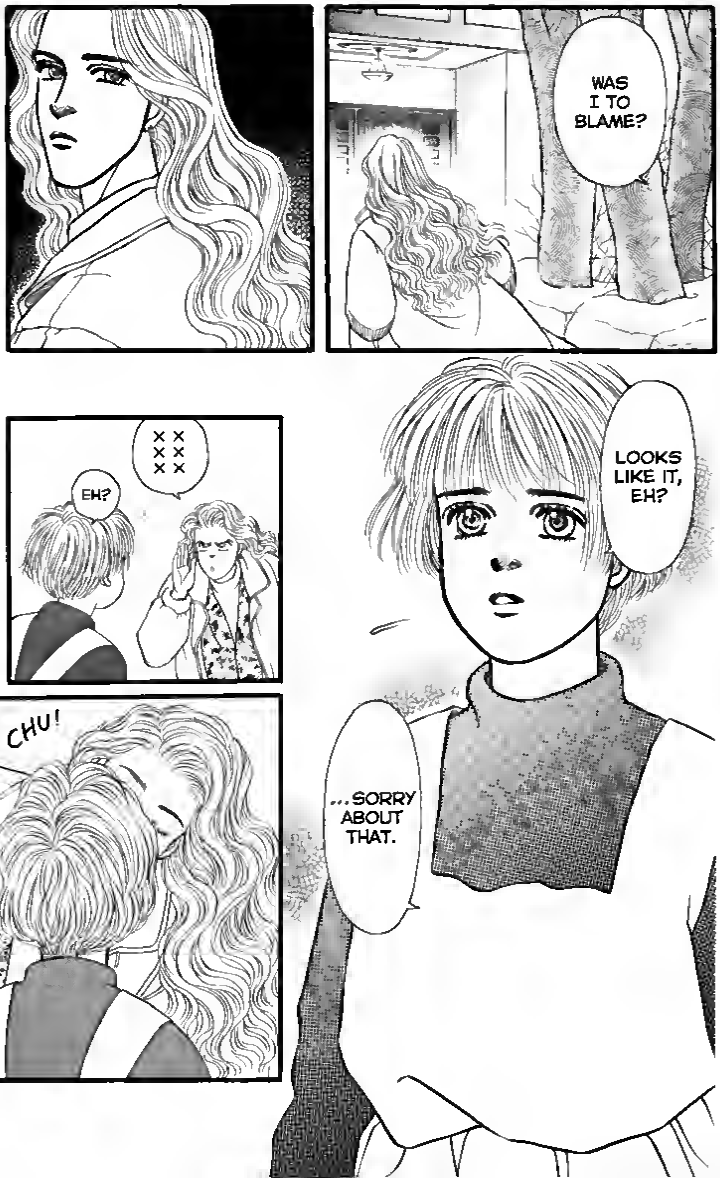

MAKE ME YOUR OLDER SISTER.
I WILL.
IF IT'S SUMIRE,
I HAVE NO COMPLAINT.
IN MY HEART, SNOW IS FALLING.

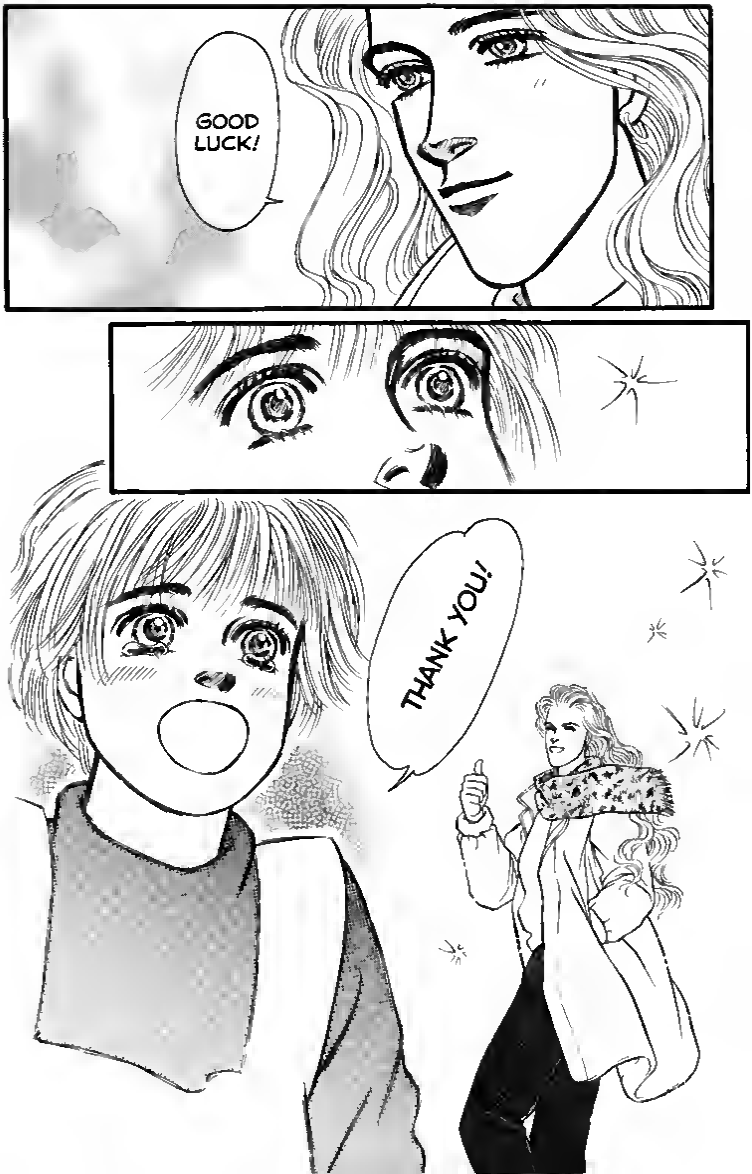
LIKE SOFT FEATHERS FALLEN FROM ANGELS,
THE GENTLE SNOW FALLS AND PILES UP.


MY HEAD FEELS LIKE IT'S SPLITTING IN TWO...
YA WW-WN-NN...
BANG BANG
WHAT'S A RED OGRE DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...?

SFX: DASH!
ダーッ
YOU'RE MAKING PEOPLE WORRY!!
AH
WHERE'D YOU GO THE WHOLE NIGHT!?
IT'S YURI!?
YO.
WHAT'S WITH THAT LOOK!?

SO TALK TO ME IN A LOW VOICE.
DO I SMELL SAKE?
ARE YOU DRUNK?
I HAVE A HANG-OVER FROM HELL.
IN SUMIRE'S ARMS.
WHERE WERE YOU A WHOLE NIGHT?
ARE YOU OKAY?
IT WAS A NIGHT OF PASSION!!
WHA
AAT!?


WAS I TO BLAME?
LOOKS LIKE IT, EH?
...SORRY ABOUT THAT.
EH?
CHU!


GOOD LUCK!
THANK YOU!

MOTH-ER?
IT SEEMS IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE SHE CAME HOME ON VACATION.
VACA-TION?
THAT IS QUITE CON-VENIENT.

YURI'S FAMILY REGIS-TER?
WHY DO I HAVE TO DO SUCH A THING!?
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOU PUT THE FAMILY REGISTER IN ORDER.

BECAUSE YURI-CHAN IS STILL LISTED AS YOUR DAUGHTER,
SUMIRE CANNOT GET MARRIED TO YURI-CHAN.
...WHAT'S THIS?
YURI AND SUMIRE
GET-TING MAR-RIED!?

WHO'S GOING TO DO SUCH A THING!
Uwaah
I AM ABSO-LUTELY AGAINST IT!!
YURI IS TO BLAME FOR MY SEPARATION FROM MAKURANO,
AND TO THINK SHE'S MARRY-ING SUMIRE?

CHAPTER 54 - THE LAND OF SNOW - THE END

Oh Dear!

Part Two

I've talked about this situation before, but telephone cards have not worked for me even once. In short, I have never succeeded in making phone calls with those cards! That doesn't happen often with other people, but since I don't go out often, it's perfectly reasonable that I don't have many opportunities to use public telephones. I, who don't set foot out the door even once a month, suddenly found myself standing in the Tokyo's Imperial Hotel's lobby. Standing there. Trying to make a phone call. That 'hotel', in English more than in Japanese, was overwhelmingly big. Buried in the telephone booth are letters packed so densely I cannot read them. Not knowing where to insert a ten-yen coin, when I looked around quietly, the man in the next phone booth showed me through the glass where to insert the card. The old man was from India. I inserted the telephone card the editorial department had given me into the machine. The old guy said "wrong" and showed me again. This old guy was being so kind to one so useless with machines as I so that for the first time in my life I could succeed in making a telephone call with a card, I tried really hard. Even so, the old guy said "wrong" with a sad look on his face. Actually, the phone booth worked with everything but my KDD card. All things considered, when I think of the old guy, I'm happy even now.

CHAPTER 55
MIRROR ICE
SCANLATION BY RPAPO

When I look
at the headlights flowing over
the already lonesome me
is standing there, upside down.
the frozen road surface,

The city too,
and the people.
and the night.

MOTHER IS AGAINST IT, SO WHY DON'T WE OPPOSE HER OPPOSITION?
THERE ARE PROOFS AND WITNESSES THAT YURI IS NOT HER BIOLOGICAL CHILD.
AND OTHER PEOPLE APART FROM MOTHER CAN PETITION IN FAMILY COURT.
BUT MOTHER IS AGAINST IT, AND NEXT TIME WE'D WIND UP FIGHTING IT IN THE DISTRICT COURT.
EVEN AT THE BEST OF TIMES, A FALSE BIRTH CERTIFICATE
WILL WITHOUT A DOUBT RESULT IN A LEGAL PENALTY.
MOTHER IS UNBENDING ENOUGH TO TURN A TRIAL ON ITS HEAD.

IF MOTHER AGREED, IT WOULD BE A SIMPLE PROCEDURE.
BUT WHY IS MOTHER SO OPPOSED?
SHE DOESN'T REALLY LIKE YURI AS HER DAUGHTER.
THOUGH SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE AN OBSESSION ABOUT HER SONS.
It's harassment.
EVEN THOUGH HER SEPARATION FROM MAKURANO WAS BECAUSE OF YURI.

THAT OLD HAG HAS A PERSPECTIVE ABOUT AS LOW AS THEY GO.
THAT ONLY MAKES THE PROBLEM WORSE.
YOU DON'T NEED TO TAKE EXTREME CARE.
DON'T TAKE YURI-CHAN BY THE HAND
Allllll right. Got it!

I'M HOME...
WELCOME BACK. WORK OVER FOR TODAY?
YEAH
SUMIRE'S COME OVER.
BY YOUR-SELF!?

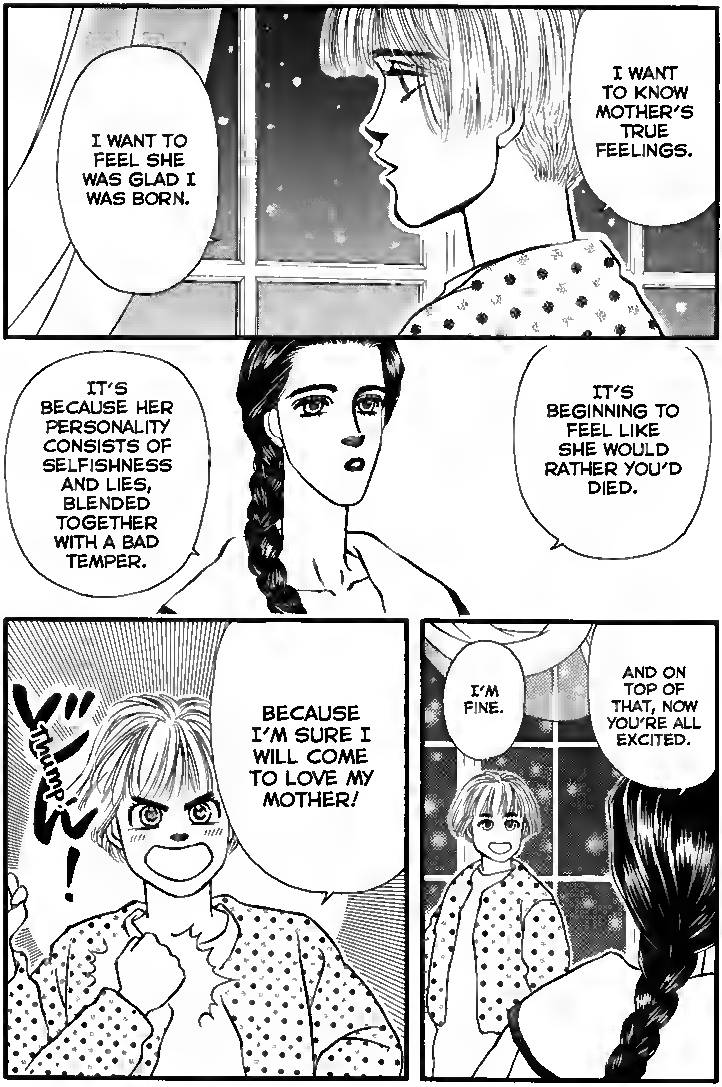
YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN PERSUADE THAT IDIOT OLD BAG BY YOURSELF!?
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING !?
YEP.
BUT I'M GOING TO TRY.
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
MORE THAN PER-SUAD-ING HER,
I WANT TO TRY AND HAVE A HEART-TO-HEART TALK WITH MOTHER.
AM I SUCH AN UNRELIABLE MAN?

WE HAVE NEVER SPOKEN TOGETHER ON EQUAL TERMS.
AND I THINK THAT THIS IS FIRST OF ALL A PROBLEM BETWEEN MOTHER AND I.
THOUGH SHE IS KINDA SCARY.
BUT PROMISE ME ONE THING.
DON'T FORGET THAT I AM HERE.
Oy!
UNDER-STOOD.
DO IT AS YOU ARE THINKING TO DO.

AND CALL ME THE MOMENT YOU THINK IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK.
WHEREVER I AM, I WILL COME TO HELP.
YES!
EH?
IT TAKES COURAGE TO ARGUE WITH MOTHER.
BUT YOU'RE EXCITED.
IT MAY BE THE POWER OF LOVE AFTER ALL, YOU KNOW.

THINKING ABOUT "WHAT IF I HADN'T BEEN BORN?"
THOUGH THERE IS A LITTLE OF THAT TOO.
LIKE THAT...
I TRIED TO IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE I DIDN'T EXIST,
AS IF I WERE LOOKING AT SCENERY REFLECTED IN A MIRROR.
AND THEN I WOUND UP COMPLETELY DEPRESSED.
MANY PEOPLE BECAME UNHAPPY BECAUSE I WAS BORN.
MOTHER, FATHER, MY BIRTH PARENTS TOO.
I WONDER JUST WHAT IT IS I AM?

I WONDER FOR WHAT WAS I BORN?
I AM NEITHER BEAUTIFUL NOR DO I HAVE ANY SPECIAL TALENT.
I WAS NOT BLESSED AT BIRTH. I AM SO INSIGNIFICANT IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER I AM HERE OR NOT.
...WHEN I SET MYSELF TO THINK ABOUT IT,
I GET MORE AND MORE ANGRY.
EXCUSE ME FOR HAVING BEEN BORN!
IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT, GO AHEAD!!
LIKE THAT!


I WANT TO KNOW MOTHER'S TRUE FEELINGS.
I WANT TO FEEL SHE WAS GLAD I WAS BORN.
IT'S BEGINNING TO FEEL LIKE SHE WOULD RATHER YOU'D DIED.
IT'S BECAUSE HER PERSONALITY CONSISTS OF SELFISHNESS AND LIES, BLENDED TOGETHER WITH A BAD TEMPER.
AND ON TOP OF THAT, NOW YOU'RE ALL EXCITED.
I'M FINE.
BECAUSE I'M SURE I WILL COME TO LOVE MY MOTHER!
Mumm
ん！

WELL THEN, THE START OF ROUND ONE.
AH, MOTHER'S COME BACK FROM HER NIGHT OUT.
EVEN FIGHTING WITH HER, I WILL FIGHT SO WE GET TO LIKE EACH OTHER MORE!
TAKE CARE.
I'M OFF.

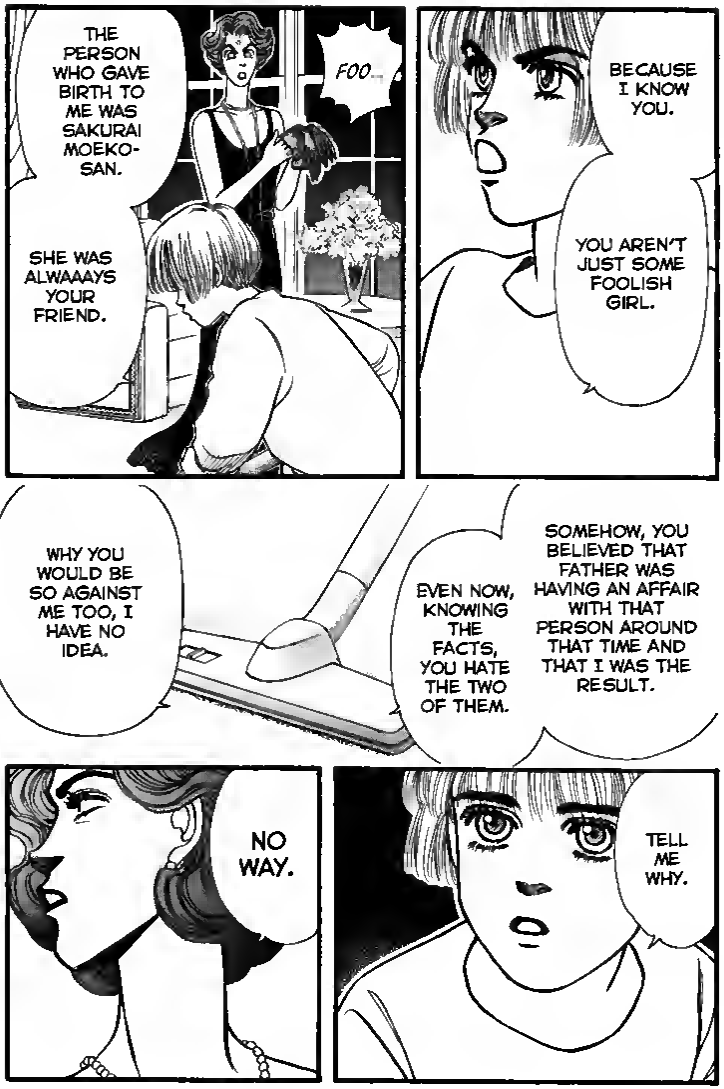
clack
Boom
GET OUT!!
THE NEXT TIME YOU COME HERE, YOU'LL REGRET IT!!
Slam!

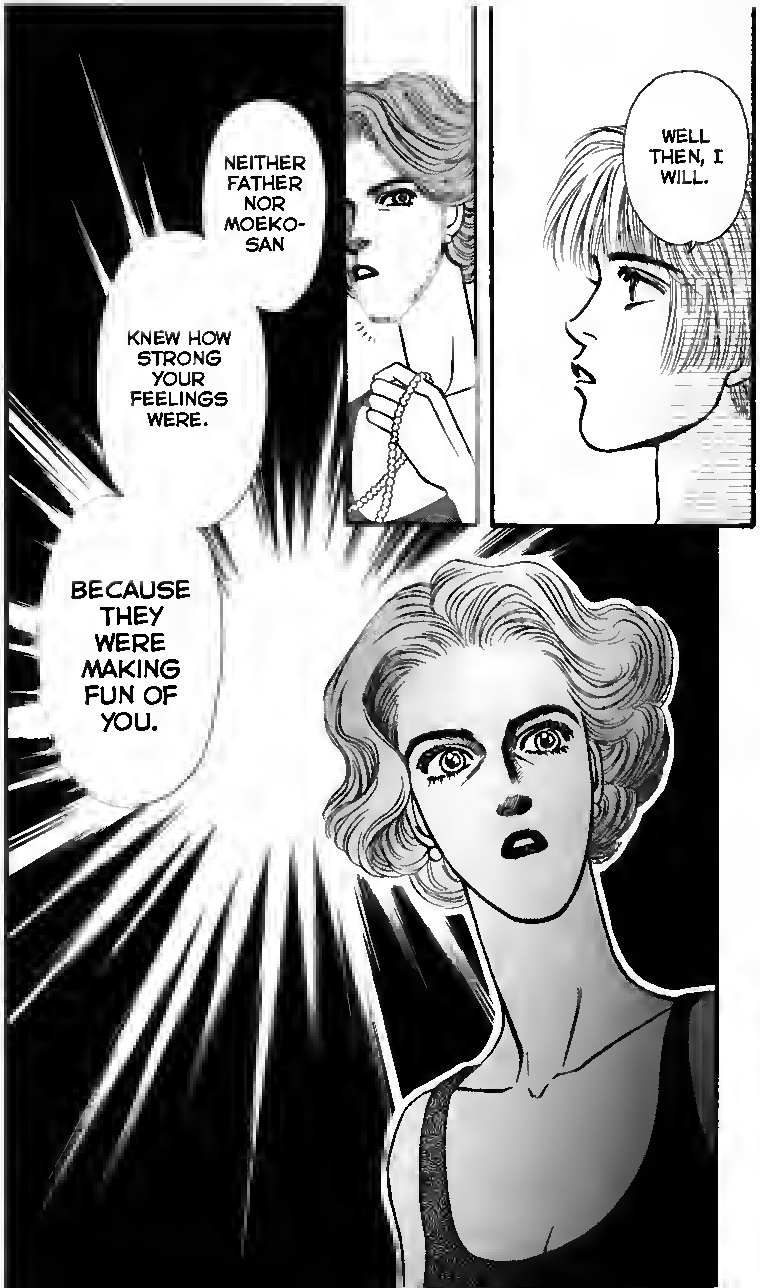
Click
THE START OF ROUND TWO.
I'VE COME TO CLEAN.
WHAM!
THAT DIDN'T HURT.
roll... rattle...
DIDN'T I SAY YOU'D REGRET IT? YOU'RE SOMETHING I HATE!

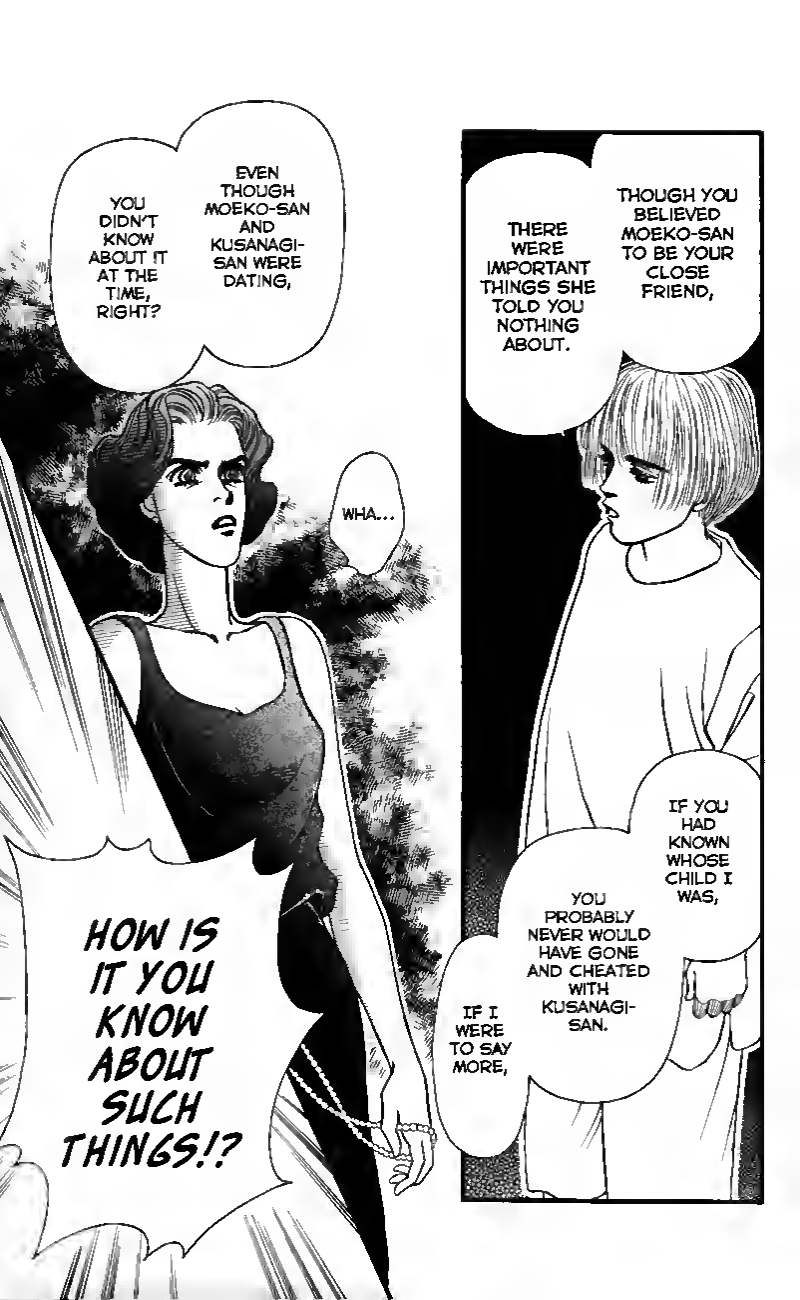
WHAT'S WITH "MOTHER"? YOU'RE SOMEBODY ELSE'S KID!
IF SO, THEN GO THROUGH THE FORMALITIES.
WELL THEN, YOU DO THE CLEANING.
BECAUSE YOU MADE THE MESS YOURSELF.
IF I DID SUCH A THING, AND YOU AND SUMIRE GOT MARRIED, THEN WOULDN'T I BE "GRAND-MOTHER"!?
I HATE YOU!
DO YOU HATE ME THAT MUCH?

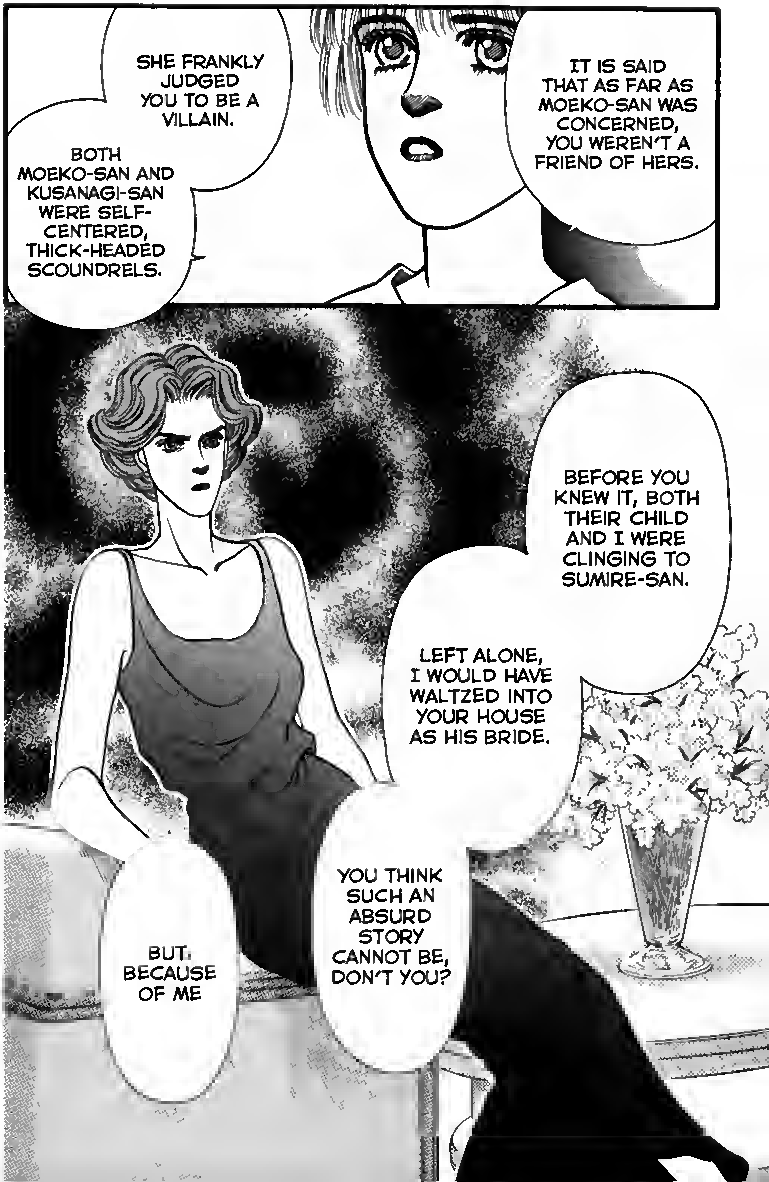
THAT WAS MAKURANO'S COMPANION!
WHY DIDN'T YOU CORRECT IT?
THEN WHY DID YOU REGISTER ME AS YOUR TRUE CHILD?
THAT'S RIGHT.
BECAUSE IF I HAD, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN TOSSED AWAY SOMEWHERE.
WASN'T IT BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO BE MOTHER TO FATHER'S CHILDREN?
BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT I WASN'T FATHER'S CHILD.

IT WAS YOUR FAULT! YOU DESTROYED PEOPLE'S HAPPINESS.
HAD I KNOWN, I WOULDN'T HAVE BROKEN UP WITH MAKURANO.
NOT SO!
YOU WERE THE ONE IN THE WRONG.
DON'T TALK ABOUT THINGS YOU'VE NEITHER SEEN NOR DONE!!
WELL, SHOW ME THEN!
BECAUSE YOU WERE TOYING WITH FATHER'S AFFECTIONS.


THE PERSON WHO GAVE BIRTH TO ME WAS SAKURAI MOEKO-SAN.
FOO...
SHE WAS ALWAAAYS YOUR FRIEND.
BECAUSE I KNOW YOU.
YOU AREN'T JUST SOME FOOLISH GIRL.
WHY YOU WOULD BE SO AGAINST ME TOO, I HAVE NO IDEA.
EVEN NOW, KNOWING THE FACTS, YOU HATE THE TWO OF THEM.
SOMEHOW, YOU BELIEVED THAT FATHER WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH THAT PERSON AROUND THAT TIME AND THAT I WAS THE RESULT.
NO WAY.
TELL ME WHY.


WELL THEN, I WILL.
NEITHER FATHER NOR MOEKO-SAN
KNEW HOW STRONG YOUR FEELINGS WERE.
BECAUSE THEY WERE MAKING FUN OF YOU.


THOUGH YOU BELIEVED MOEKO-SAN TO BE YOUR CLOSE FRIEND,
THERE WERE IMPORTANT THINGS SHE TOLD YOU NOTHING ABOUT.
IF YOU HAD KNOWN WHOSE CHILD I WAS,
YOU PROBABLY NEVER WOULD HAVE GONE AND CHEATED WITH KUSANAGI-SAN.
IF I WERE TO SAY MORE,
EVEN THOUGH MOEKO-SAN AND KUSANAGI-SAN WERE DATING,
YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT AT THE TIME, RIGHT?
WHA...
HOW IS IT YOU KNOW ABOUT SUCH THINGS!?


IT IS SAID THAT AS FAR AS MOEKO-SAN WAS CONCERNED, YOU WEREN'T A FRIEND OF HERS.
SHE FRANKLY JUDGED YOU TO BE A VILLAIN.
BOTH MOEKO-SAN AND KUSANAGI-SAN WERE SELF-CENTERED, THICK-HEADED SCOUNDRELS.
BEFORE YOU KNEW IT, BOTH THEIR CHILD AND I WERE CLINGING TO SUMIRE-SAN.
LEFT ALONE, I WOULD HAVE WALTZED INTO YOUR HOUSE AS HIS BRIDE.
YOU THINK SUCH AN ABSURD STORY CANNOT BE, DON'T YOU?
BUT, BECAUSE OF ME

YOU TREATED FATHER REALLY, REALLY BADLY.
STOP IT!
Crash!

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO!?
FROM ONE THING TO ANOTHER I DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER.
YOU CAN GET ANGRY, JUST DON'T THROW THINGS!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU HEARD IT FROM, BUT PEOPLE'S OLD WOUNDS...
YOU'VE WOUNDED ME.

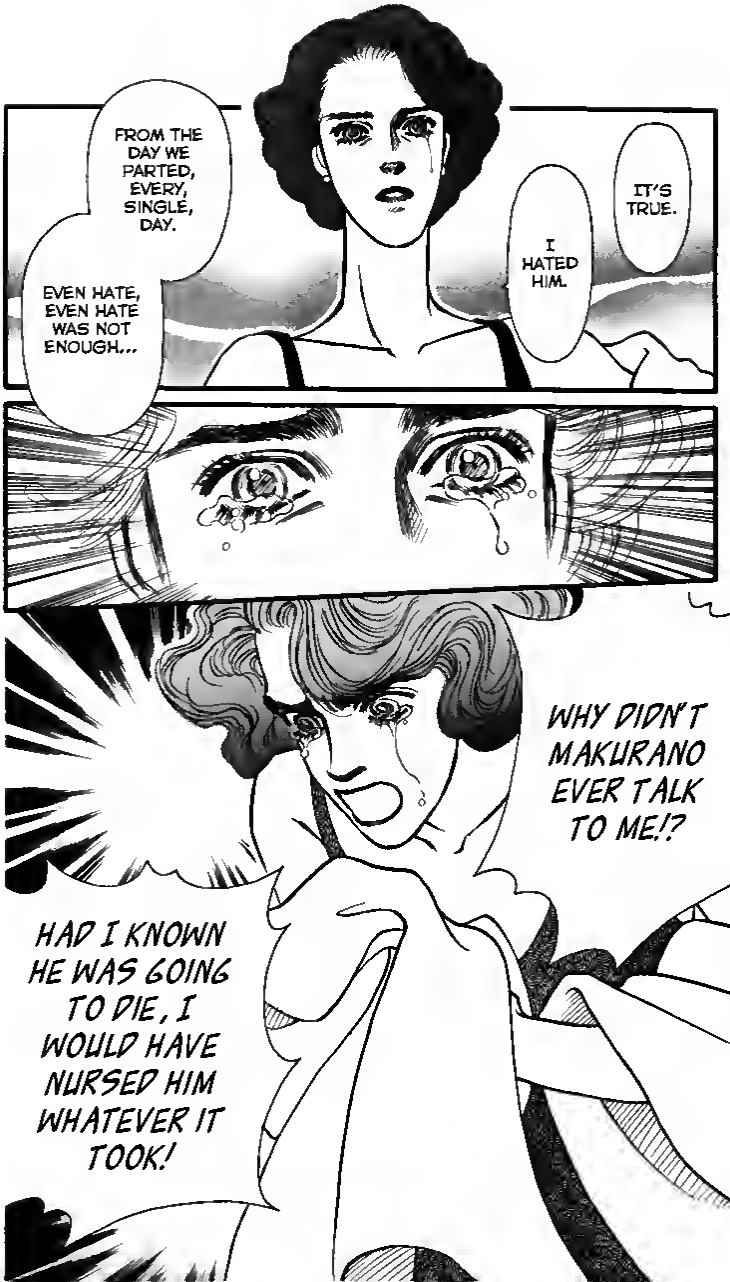
WHA... WHAT? THAT'S HARDLY A WOUND.
TAKE CARE OF IT.
EH!?
OH NO!
Drip...
BECAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO ALWAYS CLEANS YOUR ROOM!
KNOWING THAT WOULD BE OBVIOUS!
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE THINGS IN MY ROOM?
IT'S NOT "OH NO!"
THERE'S A MEDICINE BOX IN THAT WARDROBE, SO HURRY UP.

ANYONE CAN STICK ON A BAND-AID.
WOW, YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THIS.
EHEHE
SORRY ABOUT ALL THAT STUFF YOU DIDN'T WANT TO REMEMBER, ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER.
crash clatter
THOUGH AS FOR WHO TOLD ME ALL THAT,

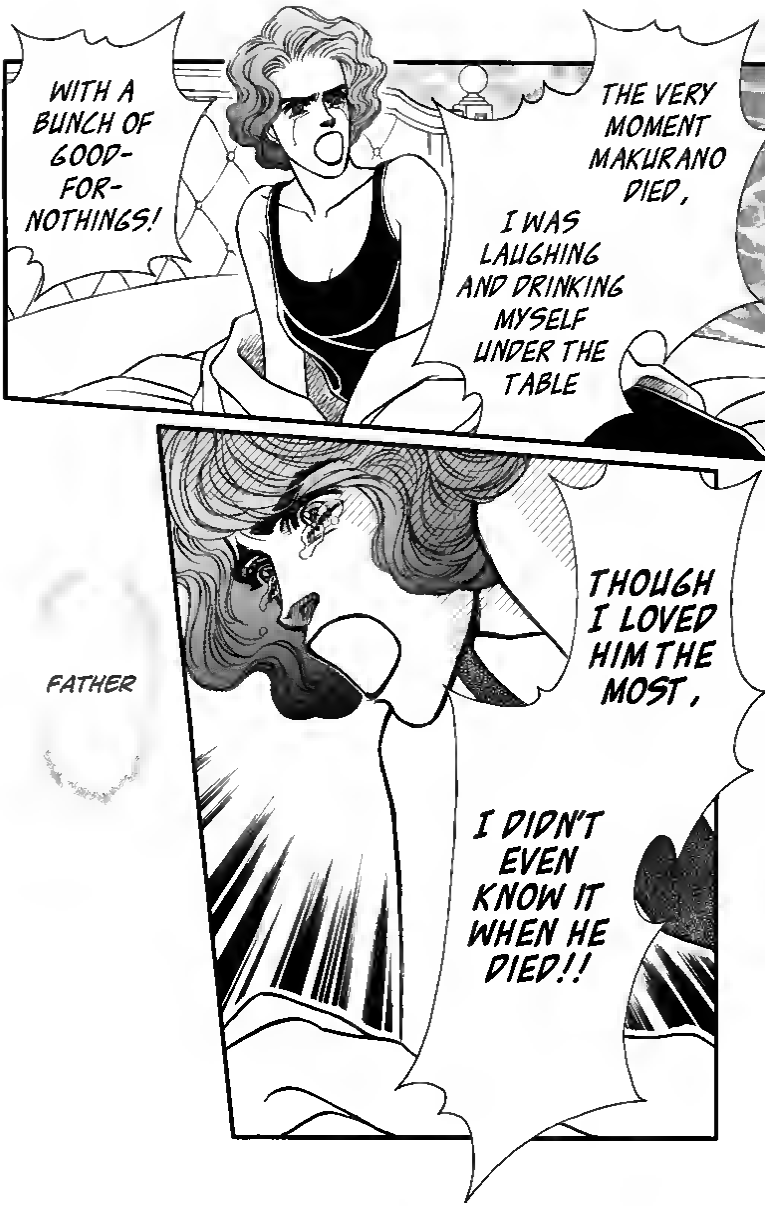
I TOLD YOU HOW YOU CAME TO BE THIS WAY.
EH!?
IT WAS ALL ME, GUESSING.
WHAT!? WHAT!?
THOUGH IT SEEMS ONLY NATURAL THAT PEOPLE WOULD HATE YOU.
THAT IS, BECAUSE YOU LIED, SELFISHLY AND RECKLESSLY.
BUT IF THAT REALLY WERE ALL YOU WERE,
YOU WOULD NOT HAVE LOVED FATHER SO MUCH.

IF SHE HATES ME,
I DON'T THINK SHE WILL FEEL SAD
EVEN AS I DISAPPEAR FROM THE WORLD.
BECAUSE YOU WERE YOU,
HE MOST LIKELY THOUGHT YOU WOULD QUICKLY FORGET HIM AND QUICKLY SEIZE UPON SOME DIFFERENT HAPPINESS.
BUT THAT,
WAS THE BEGINNING OF ALL THE MISUNDER-STANDINGS
FATHER DIDN'T KNOW, YOU SEE.

HOW MUCH YOU LOVED HIM...
HOW MUCH THIS HATRED GNAWED ON YOU.


IT'S TRUE.
I HATED HIM.
FROM THE DAY WE PARTED, EVERY, SINGLE, DAY.
EVEN HATE, EVEN HATE WAS NOT ENOUGH...
WHY DIDN'T MAKURANO EVER TALK TO ME!?
HAD I KNOWN HE WAS GOING TO DIE, I WOULD HAVE NURSED HIM WHATEVER IT TOOK!

I WANTED TO EMBRACE HIM TO THE END OF ENDS!
WHY!?
AM I A FOOL!?
A SELFISH, CHEATING WOMAN!?
WHY DID MAKURANO NOT GIVE ME THAT TIME!?
THAT'S RIGHT!!


WITH A BUNCH OF GOOD-FOR-NOTHINGS!
THE VERY MOMENT MAKURANO DIED,
I WAS LAUGHING AND DRINKING MYSELF UNDER THE TABLE
FATHER
THOUGH I LOVED HIM THE MOST,
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT WHEN HE DIED!!

IT'S SO MUCH!
WHAT IS THIS "IF YOU HATE ME, YOU WON'T BE SAD"?
THAT'S STUPID!
I HATED HIM!
AND I WAS SAD,
SAD AND HATE-FUL!!
FATHER
MOTHER IS CRYING!

SHE'S ALREADY CRYING, ON AND ON.
EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T INTEND TO MAKE HER SUFFER.
HOW IS IT I'VE BEEN MISTAKEN?
SHE LOVED HIM
AFTER ALL, DIDN'T SHE...?
VERY MUCH SO...

I'M SORRY, MOTHER.
I TOOK AWAY YOUR HAPPINESS
IT WAS THREE YEARS BEFORE FATHER DIED.
THOUGH HE TOOK GREAT CARE FOR ME,
I DON'T REMEMBER HIM AT ALL.
SUCH A WASTE, EH?
IF ONLY YOU HAD HAD THOSE THREE YEARS,
YOU MAY HAVE TURNED OUT A DIFFERENT PERSON FROM WHAT YOU ARE NOW.

Snub!
YOU DON'T LIKE ME AT ALL!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT!
EVEN SO, I LOVE YOU MOTHER.
THAT WAY I CAN FIGHT WITH YOU FOR THE TIME BEING.
He he
WHAT, YOU'RE GLAD!?

BUT I AM YOUR DAUGHTER ON PAPER.
AND SO WE CAN HAVE MOTHER-DAUGHTER FIGHTS.
IDIOT!
LET'S DO IT TOMORROW TOO!

YOU'RE TEN YEARS TOO YOUNG TO FIGHT ME!
SOMEHOW,
WHAT'S THIS "LET'S DO IT TOMORROW TOO!"?
I HAVEN'T AGREED TO FIGHT.
IT SEEMS A LONG TIME SINCE SINCE I'VE CRIED...
Oh, I can hardly wait!

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, DO IT YOURSELF.
I DON'T WANT TO EAT SOMETHING YOU'VE MADE!
NO WAY.
CALL THE HOUSE-KEEPER!
THE HOUSE-KEEPER DECIDED THAT I WOULD BE COOKING YOUR MEALS.
THERE'S NO CAR.
THEN I'M EATING OUT.

THIS TIME WE DON'T HAVE BAND...
YOU CAN BE MAD, JUST DON'T THROW THINGS.
BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THAT ASHTRAY, RIGHT?
Of stone
Grrr!
AOI-KUN DROVE OFF IN YOUR CAR.
OH, I SEE...
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
TOBACCO IS BAD WHEN ONE'S EXPECTING.
DID YOU QUIT SMOKING?
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SMOKING LATELY.

WHAT WAS THAT!?

MOTHER TOLD US MATTER OF FACTLY.

CHAPTER 55 - MIRROR ICE - THE END

Oh Dear!

Part Three

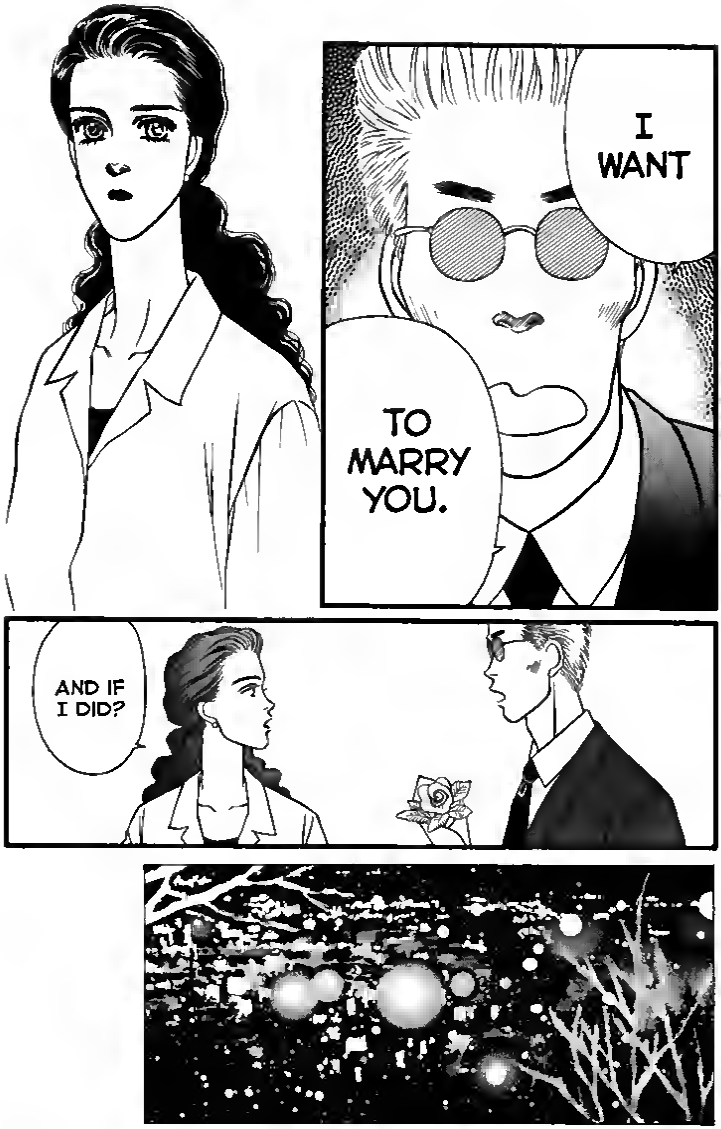
← This was the first letter I memorized in this life. For some reason, I read it as "ma". My three years older sister was the one who taught it to me. I so wondered if this older sister was truly related by blood to slow, stupid me. As she grew older, she got to be good at whatever she needed to be. My older sister knew ways of digging pitfalls, ways to change a five yen coin stolen from our parents into a five yen coin found on the road, even ways to eat deli-shop tempura, but the letter "yo" she taught me with a pink crayon was virtually the only letter I could read halfway good, all the way up to third grade of elementary school. I was such a complete dunce. I had awful grades. No matter what, I couldn't even write my own name.

← What's this? It's an "A", that's what. That's how it turned out when I wrote it. What was such a difficult letter doing at the start of the hiragana? What's more, what do I have to do to move on once I stumble and stick it to the head of my name...? I'm truly impressed that I managed to turn out to be a reasonable adult.

T/N: THE JAPANESE LETTER "よ" IS PRONOUNCE "YO". THE JAPANESE LETTER "あ" IS PRONOUNCED "A", AND AS YOU CAN SEE, IS NOT WRITTEN LIKE THE EXAMPLE ABOVE, WHICH IS IN ANY CASE A CHILDISH RENDERING OF THE LETTER.

CHAPTER 56 SCRAMBLE

SCANLATION BY RPAPO

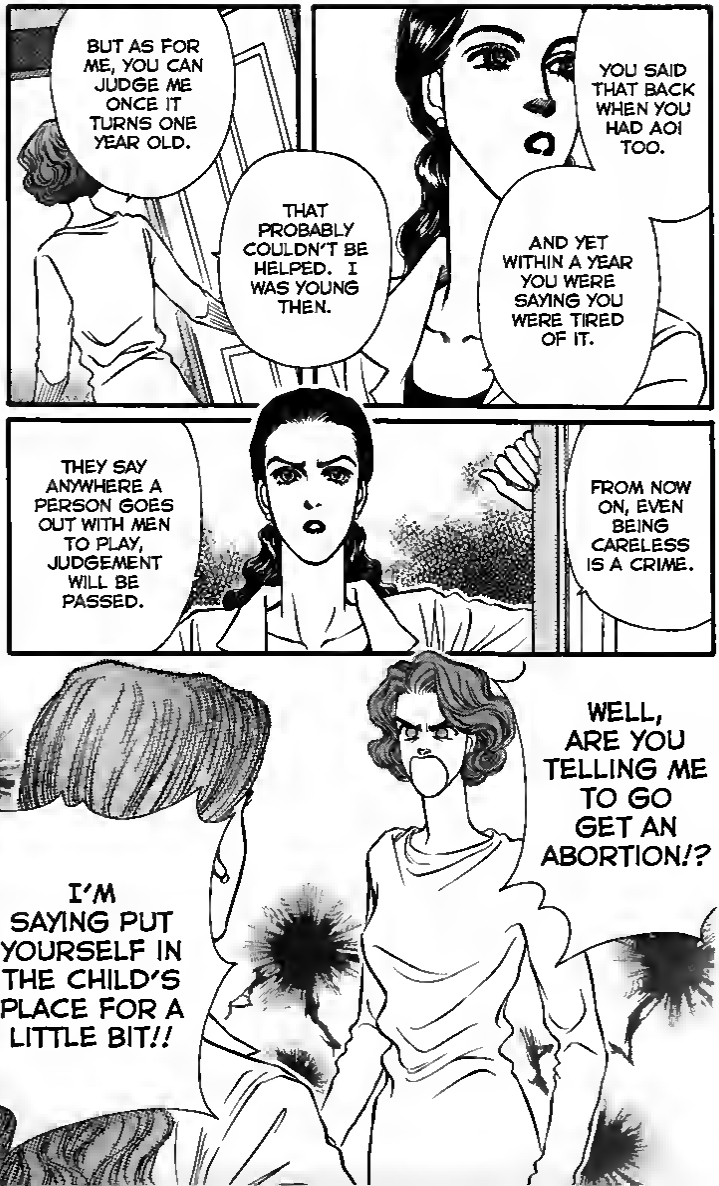

I WANT
TO MARRY YOU.
AND IF I DID?

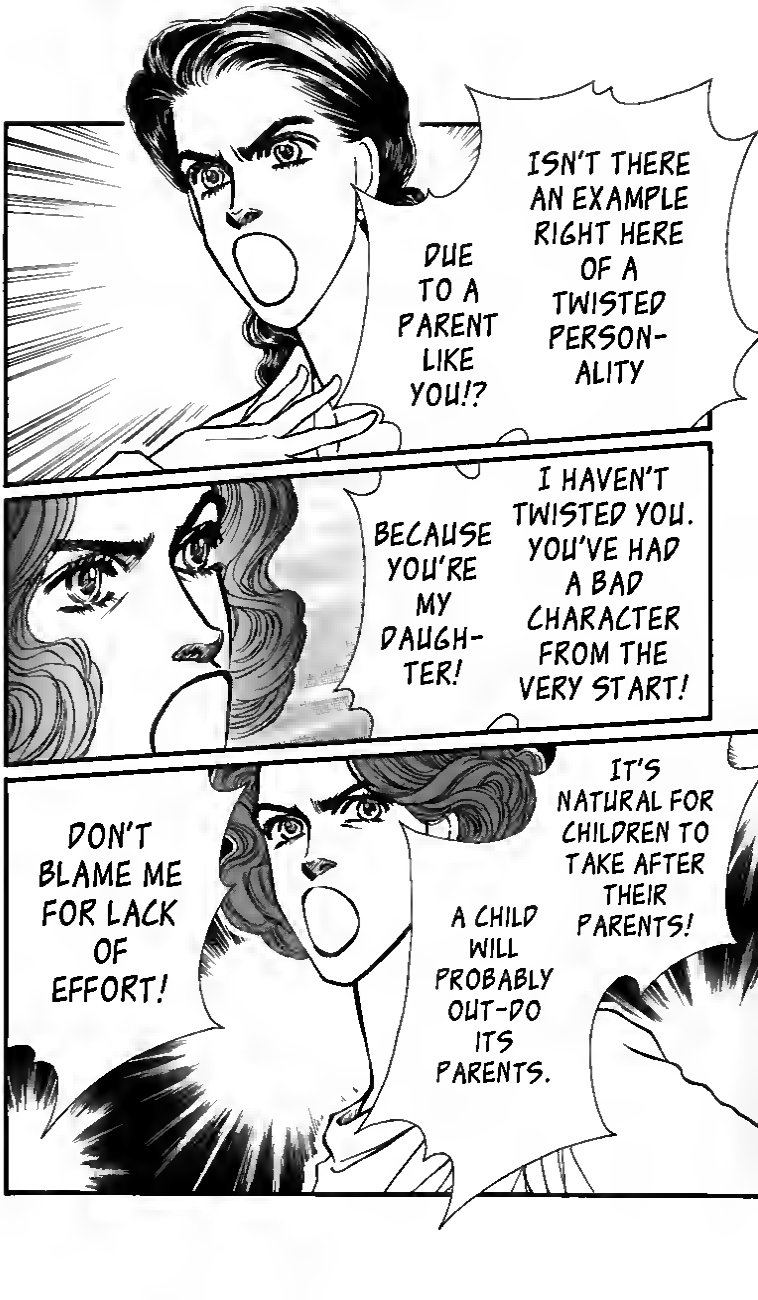
He always has the worst timing.
Nekokichi-san is truly pitiful.
Turn away
UH...
ACTUAL-LY...
HER MOTHER'S PREG-NANT!?
ISN'T THAT AWE-SOME!?
THEN THAT'S WHY SHE'S IN SUCH A BAD MOOD?
That's just wrong.

SO WHO WAS THE OTHER GUY?
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S A CHILD YOU MADE WHILE CARELESSLY SLEEPING AROUND.
WHO KNOWS.
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT WHO I'VE BEEN SEEING LATELY, BUT
IT'S NO USE WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW.

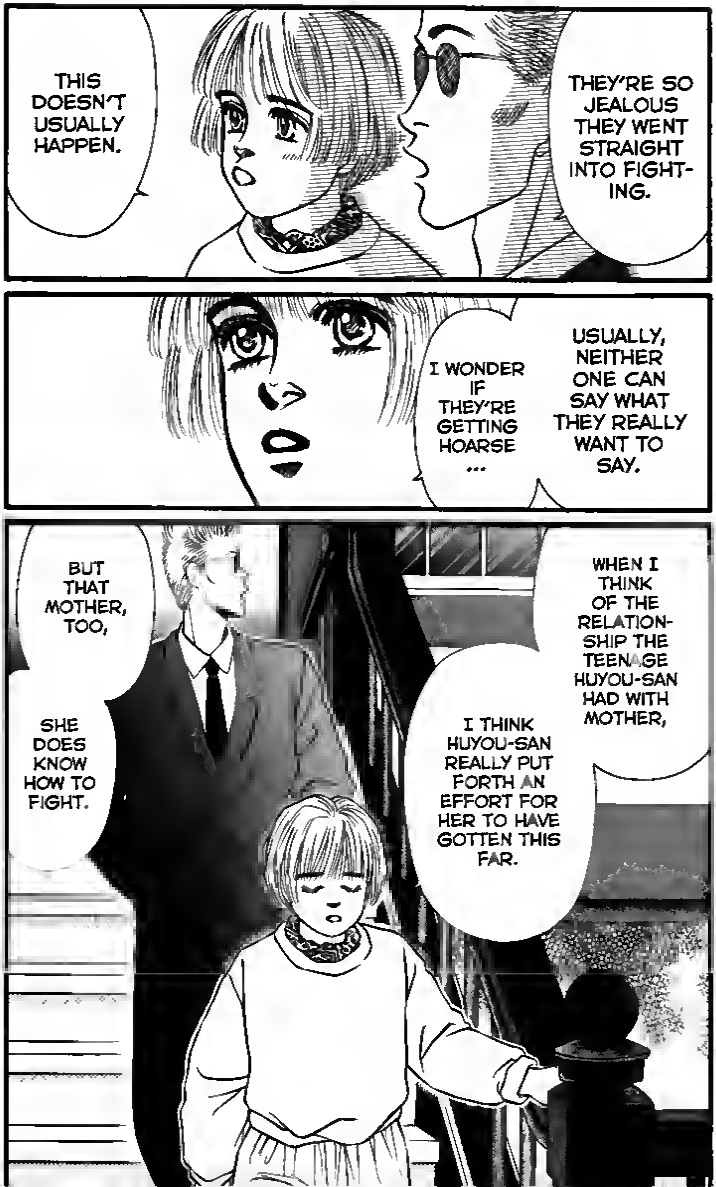
DON'T YOU KNOW HOW OLD YOU ARE?
YOU'RE PAST FIFTY.
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW IF YOU CAN SAFELY GIVE BIRTH.
SHUT UP!
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO GIVE BIRTH TO THE CHILD, SO WHY DO YOU CARE!?
THAT'S NO GOOD!!
YOU WOULD BE HAPPY TO GIVE BIRTH TO A CHILD BY SOME GUY YOU DON'T EVEN LOVE.
JUST GIVING BIRTH, NOT EVEN RAISING IT.
YOU'VE NOT EVEN RAISED ONE!!

I AM RAISING IT ALL BY MYSELF!!
OUR HOUSE KEEPER RAISED ME.
WHO WILL YOU DEPEND ON THIS TIME!?


BUT AS FOR ME, YOU CAN JUDGE ME ONCE IT TURNS ONE YEAR OLD.
THAT PROBABLY COULDN'T BE HELPED. I WAS YOUNG THEN.
YOU SAID THAT BACK WHEN YOU HAD AOI TOO.
AND YET WITHIN A YEAR YOU WERE SAYING YOU WERE TIRED OF IT.
THEY SAY ANYWHERE A PERSON GOES OUT WITH MEN TO PLAY, JUDGEMENT WILL BE PASSED.
FROM NOW ON, EVEN BEING CARELESS IS A CRIME.
WELL, ARE YOU TELLING ME TO GO GET AN ABORTION!?
I'M SAYING PUT YOURSELF IN THE CHILD'S PLACE FOR A LITTLE BIT!!

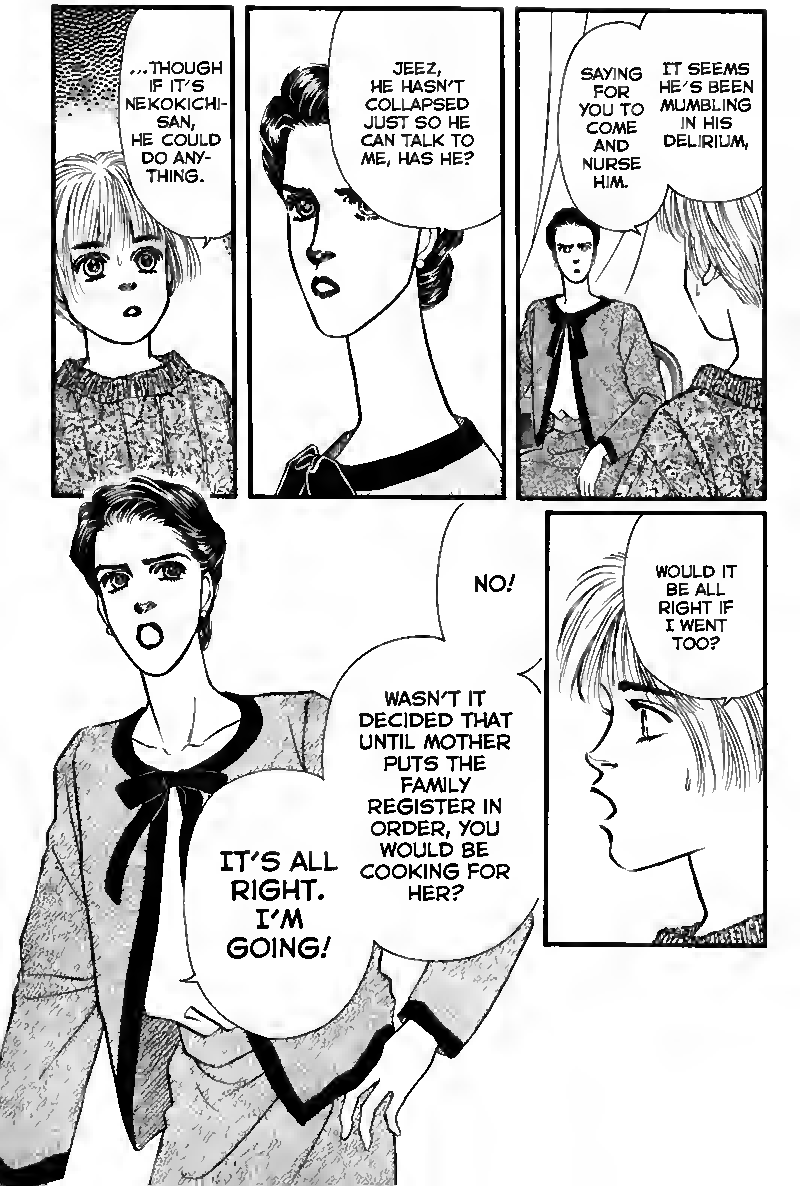

ISN'T THERE AN EXAMPLE RIGHT HERE OF A TWISTED PERSON-ALITY
DUE TO A PARENT LIKE YOU!?
I HAVEN'T TWISTED YOU. YOU'VE HAD A BAD CHARACTER FROM THE VERY START!
BECAUSE YOU'RE MY DAUGH-TER!
IT'S NATURAL FOR CHILDREN TO TAKE AFTER THEIR PARENTS!
A CHILD WILL PROBABLY OUT-DO ITS PARENTS.
DON'T BLAME ME FOR LACK OF EFFORT!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH LIVING MY OWN LIFE AS I WISH?
WELL NOW! JUST WHAT KIND OF EFFORT HAVE YOU MADE!?
YOU LIVE ENTIRELY AS YOU PLEASE.
WHAT'D YOU SAY!?
WHAT!?
THIS IS INCREDI-BLE...


THIS DOESN'T USUALLY HAPPEN.
THEY'RE SO JEALOUS THEY WENT STRAIGHT INTO FIGHTING.
USUALLY, NEITHER ONE CAN SAY WHAT THEY REALLY WANT TO SAY.
I WONDER IF THEY'RE GETTING HOARSE ...
WHEN I THINK OF THE RELATIONSHIP THE TEENAGE HUYOU-SAN HAD WITH MOTHER,
I THINK HUYOU-SAN REALLY PUT FORTH AN EFFORT FOR HER TO HAVE GOTTEN THIS FAR.
BUT THAT MOTHER, TOO,
SHE DOES KNOW HOW TO FIGHT.

WELL, IF I WERE TO SAY "I'M SAVED" I'D BE KNOCKED RIGHT OVER.
True, true
THAT, IS SOMETHING YOU MUST NOT SAY TO HUYOU-SAN AS THINGS ARE.
SALVATION IS FOR THE CHILDREN.
SHE KNOWS FOR HERSELF SHE IS A BAD MOTHER.
ISN'T THERE A BETTER WAY?
THAT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT.
IF THIS WERE THE USUAL HUYOU-SAN, SHE'D BE COOLER ABOUT IT.
IF YOU LEAVE THOSE TWO ALONE,
THE VOLTAGE TENDS TO RISE.

NEKO-KICHI HAS COL-LAPSED!?
WHAT'D YOU SAY!?
THOUGH I THOUGHT HE WAS FAKING A SUDDEN ILLNESS.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE HE WORKED TOO HARD TRYING TO DO THAT.
HE TOLD ME HE'D MAKE SOME TIME TO HAVE A NICE LONG TALK WITH YOU,


...THOUGH IF IT'S NEKOKICHI-SAN, HE COULD DO ANY-THING.
JEEZ, HE HASN'T COLLAPSED JUST SO HE CAN TALK TO ME, HAS HE?
IT SEEMS HE'S BEEN MUMBLING IN HIS DELIRIUM, SAYING FOR YOU TO COME AND NURSE HIM.
WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT IF I WENT TOO?
NO!
WASN'T IT DECIDED THAT UNTIL MOTHER PUTS THE FAMILY REGISTER IN ORDER, YOU WOULD BE COOKING FOR HER?
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M GOING!

...WHAT WILL SHE DO IF HE'S FAKING...?
Ticked off
AH, SHE CAME!

annoyed
PARDON ME COMING HERE TO BOTHER YOU.
THIS WAY.
WELL, HIS FEVER HASN'T DROPPED BELOW 39 YET.
HAS HE SEEN A DOCTOR?
BY AMBU-LANCE!
SURE WAS NOISY
HE'S HERE.
HE'S SLEEP-ING RIGHT NOW.
OUR SENSEI WAS HUMAN AFTER ALL...
HE WAS WORKING TOO HARD.
AT ANY RATE, HE HAS BEATEN ALL HIS DEAD-LINES.

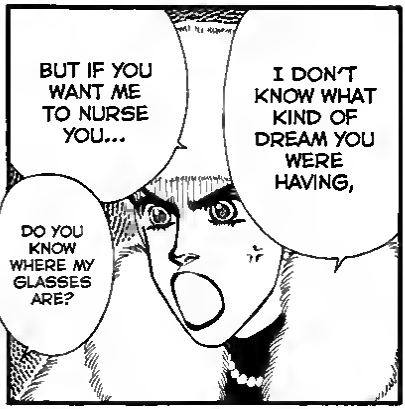
WHAT ABOUT YOUR WORK!?
EH?
WELL THEN, WITH THAT WE'LL...
US GUYS, WE'RE ALL ON BREAK FOR NOW.
ALL OF US, SENSEI,
IT'S ALL IN ORDER.
IF YOU GUYS HAVE FREE TIME, SHOULDN'T YOU BE THE ONES NURSING HIM!?
We know-thing. We can't hear you.
HEY!
LATER. TREAT HIM WELL.

SFX: RUNNING STEPS
HEY YOU ...!!
だだだだだだ
...JEEZ!
kerchak

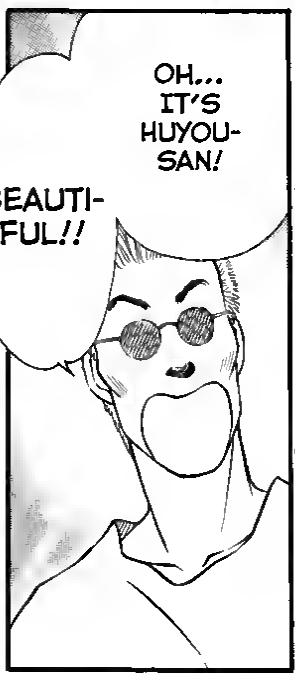
HMM
HE REALLY DOES HAVE A FEVER.
NGH...
KEIKO...

HITOMI
I'M SURPRISED HOW UNPREPARED THIS GUY IS
WHO IS THIS 'KEIKO'?
YUKARI
RIDICULOUS! LET'S GO HOME!!
HUYOU-SAN...
KAZU-YO
TERU
OMITSU
YUKIE
KOHARU
YOUKO
WHAT THE HECK?
CHIAKI
MAYUMI
YAE
HIROKO
NORIKO
RIKA
KAORU
SANAE

THAT'S MY DAIFUKU.
DON'T EAT IT ALL.
HUYOU-SAN, I'M COUNTING ON YOU...
NOW WHAT?
HMPH. WASN'T THAT JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME?
WHAT PART OF ME ARE YOU EATING?
WHOA... HUYOU-SAN IS IN THE PALACE.
YOU BOILED MY LONG JOHNS AND ATE THEM?
AH, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WAKE UP!!


I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF DREAM YOU WERE HAVING,
BUT IF YOU WANT ME TO NURSE YOU...
DO YOU KNOW WHERE MY GLASSES ARE?

HUH?


OH... IT'S HUYOU-SAN!
BEAUTI-FUL!!

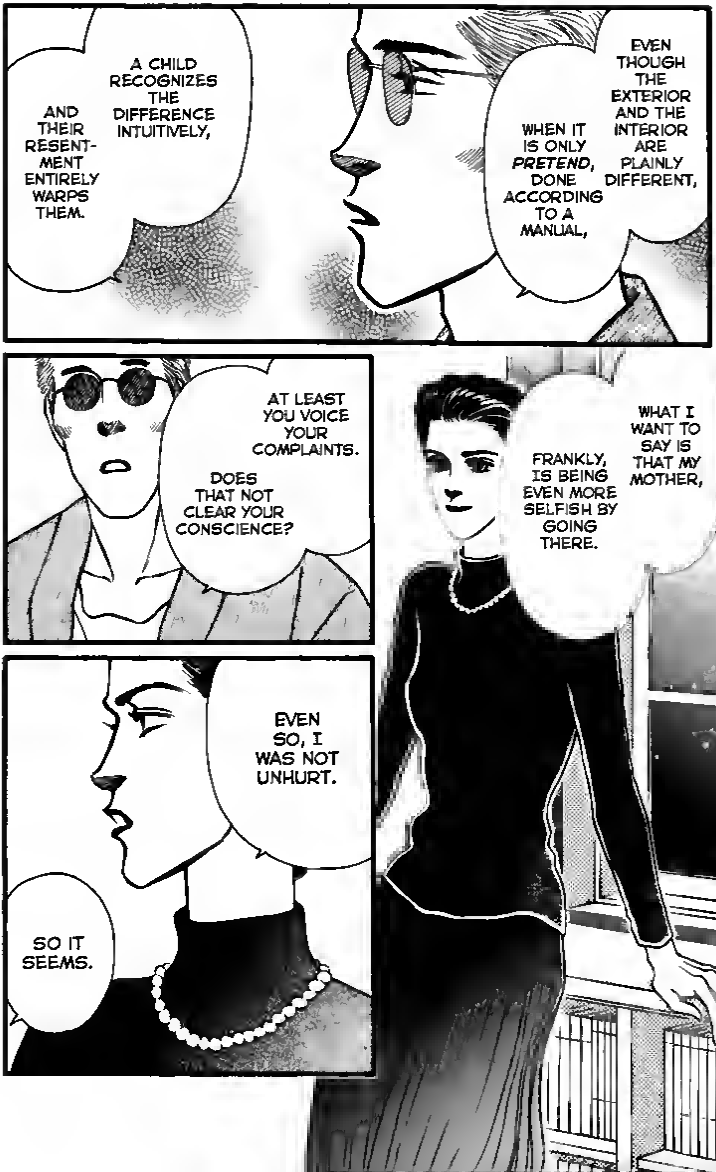
SOMEBODY TRYING TO SLEEP OFF A FEVER HAS NO NEED OF GLASSES.
THEY MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT THEY'RE PRETTY STRONG.
AH, HERE THEY ARE.

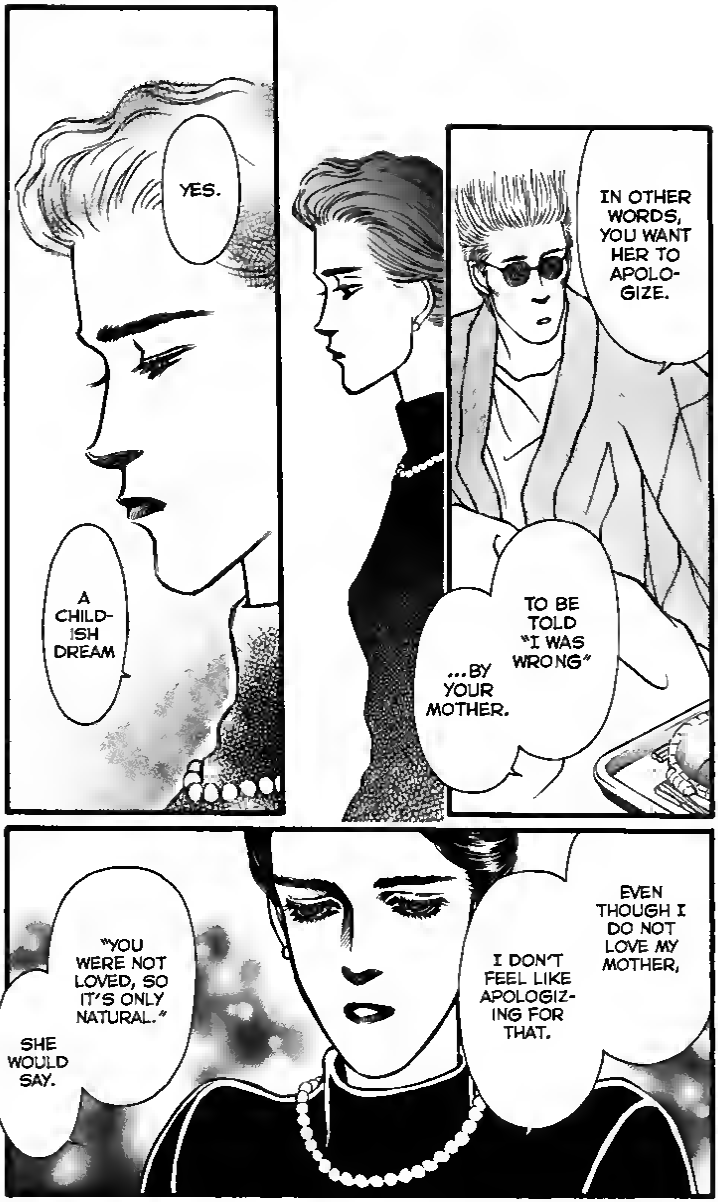
AND?
EH?
WEREN'T YOU TAKEN IN AN AMBULANCE?
YOU DON'T REMEMBER?
NOT A THING.
JUST NOW YOU SAID YOU CAME TO NURSE ME.
THAT TRUE?

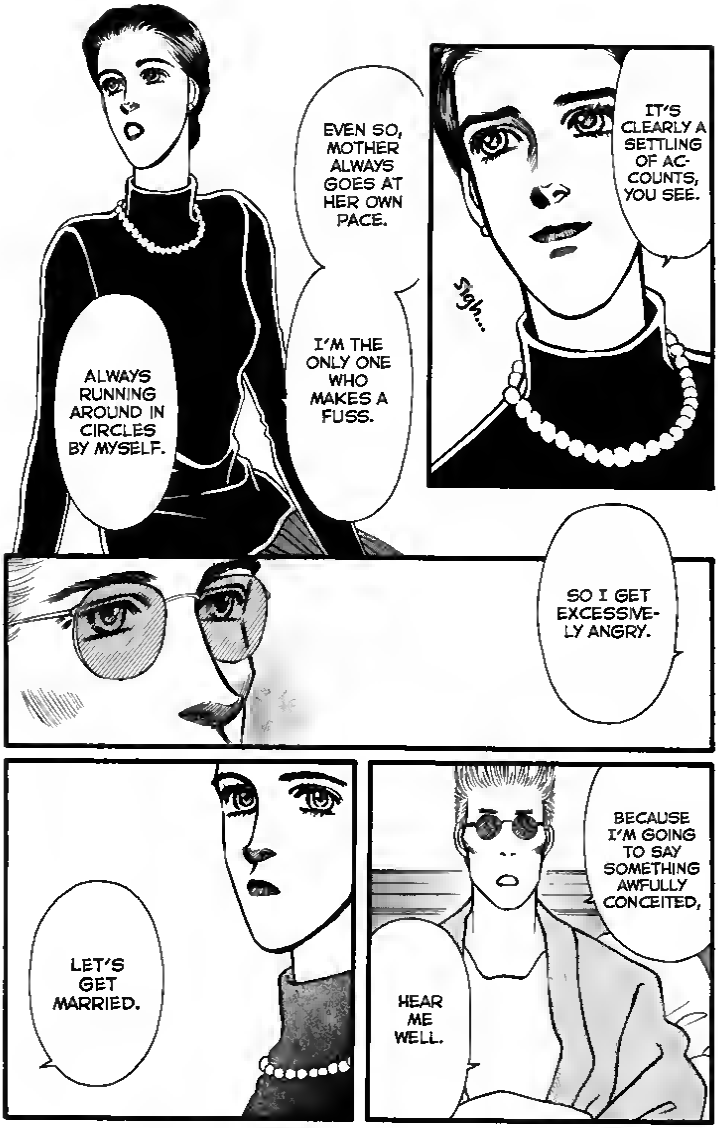
THIS GUY...
DAIFUKU WERE MULTIPLY-ING MORE AND MORE IN MY DREAM.
And well, giving them all names was really hard
...DOES IT BOTHER YOU?
WHAT'S WITH YOU SAYING ALL THOSE WOMEN'S NAMES IN YOUR DELIRIUM?
IF THAT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN LOVE YOU, THEN I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS.
YOU SAID MY NAME TOO?
AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING WITH HER?
YOUR MOTHER'S GOING TO GIVE BIRTH, ISN'T SHE?
BUT WHERE'S 'IN THE PALACE'?

IN BODY AND HEART, I WOULD TAKE HER TO BE TEN YEARS YOUNGER
HOWEVER YOU LOOK AT IT, SHE DOESN'T LOOK FIFTY.
IT'S NOT SO MUCH THAT SHE'S SAYING SHE WILL GIVE BIRTH.
THE QUESTION IS WHETHER SHE HAS THE WILLINGNESS TO BE A PROPER MOTHER.
I DON'T WANT THE NEWBORN CHILD TO BE FORCED TO BE ME ALL OVER AGAIN.

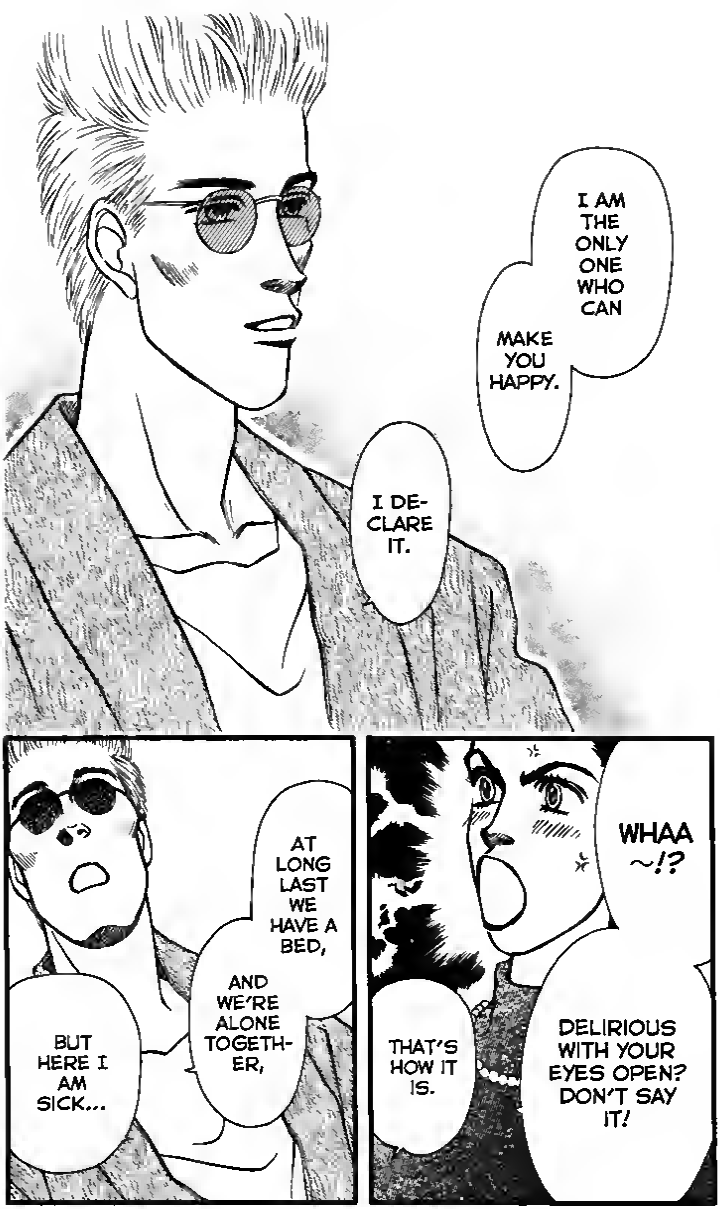
DO YOU HOLD A GRUDGE AGAINST MY MOTHER?
BECAUSE IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT I SHOULD HOLD A GRUDGE,
I CAN HOLD A TRULY MAGNIFI-CENT ONE.
DON'T THINK THAT'S IMPOSSI-BLE.
IF THAT MOTHER OF YOURS PLAYS "MOTHER",
SHE WILL DAMAGE THE CHILD ALL THE MORE.
AND THAT IS THE SILVER LINING FOR ME.
WHAT'S THAT!?
WELL, HEAR ME OUT.
EVEN THOUGH IN HER MIND SHE HATES KIDS,
SHE PRETENDS TO BE THE KIND AND GENTLE PARENT,
AND EVEN THOUGH IT'S HER EGO EGGING HER ON,
SHE'S A PARENT PLANNING TO DEVOTE HERSELF TO HER CHILD.

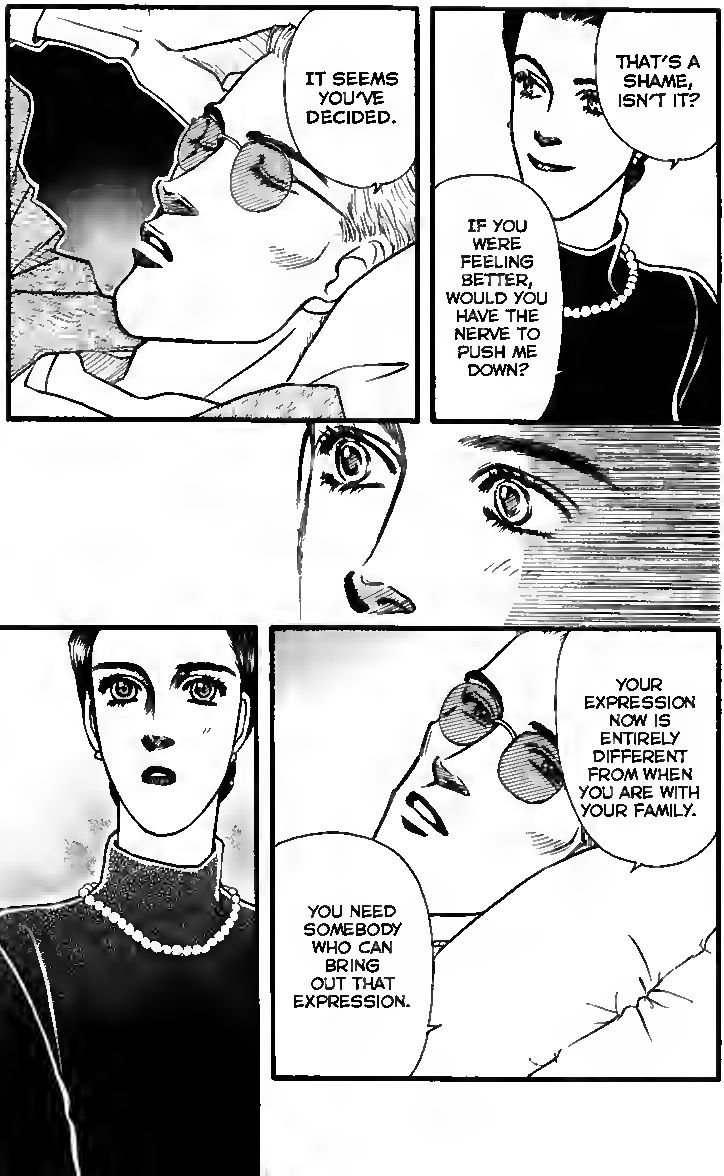

EVEN THOUGH THE EXTERIOR AND THE INTERIOR ARE PLAINLY DIFFERENT,
WHEN IT IS ONLY *PRETEND*, DONE ACCORDING TO A MANUAL,
A CHILD RECOGNIZES THE DIFFERENCE INTUITIVELY,
AND THEIR RESENT-MENT ENTIRELY WARPS THEM.
WHAT I WANT TO SAY IS THAT MY MOTHER,
FRANKLY, IS BEING EVEN MORE SELFISH BY GOING THERE.
AT LEAST YOU VOICE YOUR COMPLAINTS.
DOES THAT NOT CLEAR YOUR CONSCIENCE?
EVEN SO, I WAS NOT UNHURT.
SO IT SEEMS.


YES.
A CHILD-ISH DREAM
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU WANT HER TO APOLO-GIZE.
TO BE TOLD "I WAS WRONG" ...BY YOUR MOTHER.
EVEN THOUGH I DO NOT LOVE MY MOTHER,
I DON'T FEEL LIKE APOLOGIZ-ING FOR THAT.
"YOU WERE NOT LOVED, SO IT'S ONLY NATURAL." SHE WOULD SAY.


ALWAYS RUNNING AROUND IN CIRCLES BY MYSELF.
I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO MAKES A FUSS.
EVEN SO, MOTHER ALWAYS GOES AT HER OWN PACE.
IT'S CLEARLY A SETTLING OF ACCOUNTS, YOU SEE.
Sigh...
SO I GET EXCESSIVELY ANGRY.
BECAUSE I'M GOING TO SAY SOMETHING AWFULLY CONCEITED,
HEAR ME WELL.
LET'S GET MARRIED.

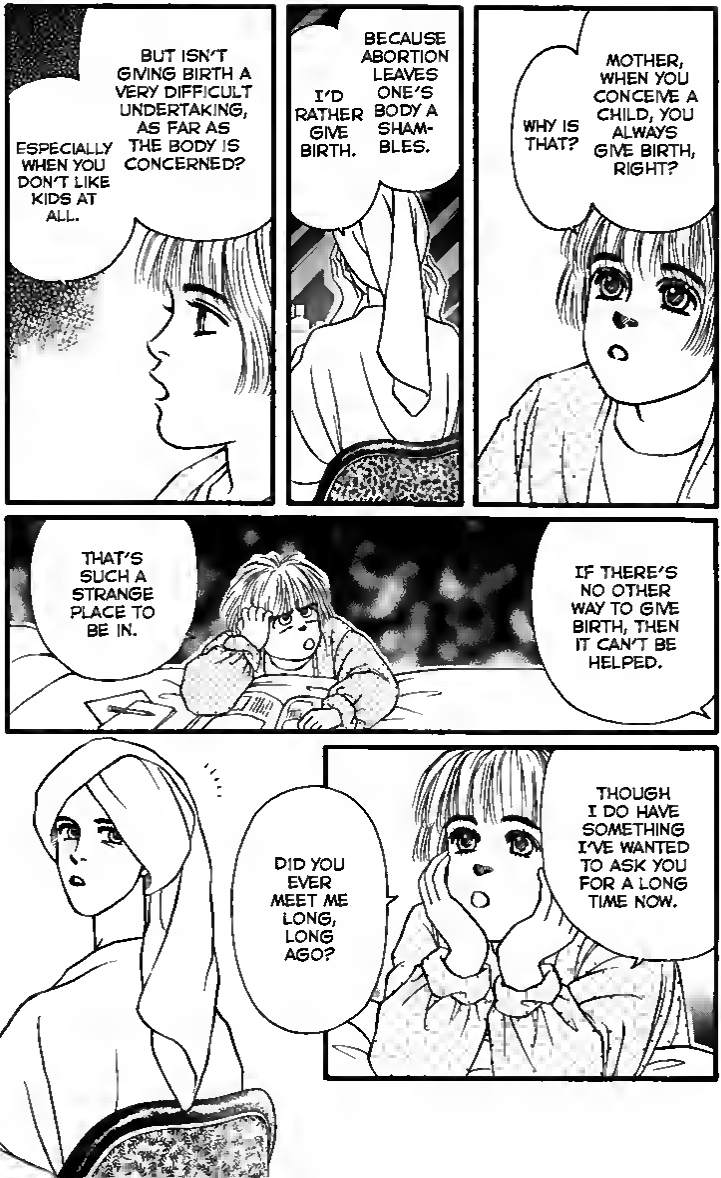
WHAT'S THAT...
YOU AREN'T HAPPY RIGHT NOW,
SO YOU CAN NEVER PULL YOURSELF OUT
OF YOUR OLD MIS-FORTUNE.
YOU NEED A NEW HAPPINESS.
SO WHY DO I HAVE TO MARRY YOU!?
WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE!?


I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN MAKE YOU HAPPY.
I DE-CLARE IT.
AT LONG LAST WE HAVE A BED,
AND WE'RE ALONE TOGETH-ER,
BUT HERE I AM SICK...
WHAA ~!?
DELIRIOUS WITH YOUR EYES OPEN? DON'T SAY IT!
THAT'S HOW IT IS.


IT SEEMS YOU'VE DECIDED.
THAT'S A SHAME, ISN'T IT?
IF YOU WERE FEELING BETTER, WOULD YOU HAVE THE NERVE TO PUSH ME DOWN?
YOUR EXPRESSION NOW IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM WHEN YOU ARE WITH YOUR FAMILY.
YOU NEED SOMEBODY WHO CAN BRING OUT THAT EXPRESSION.

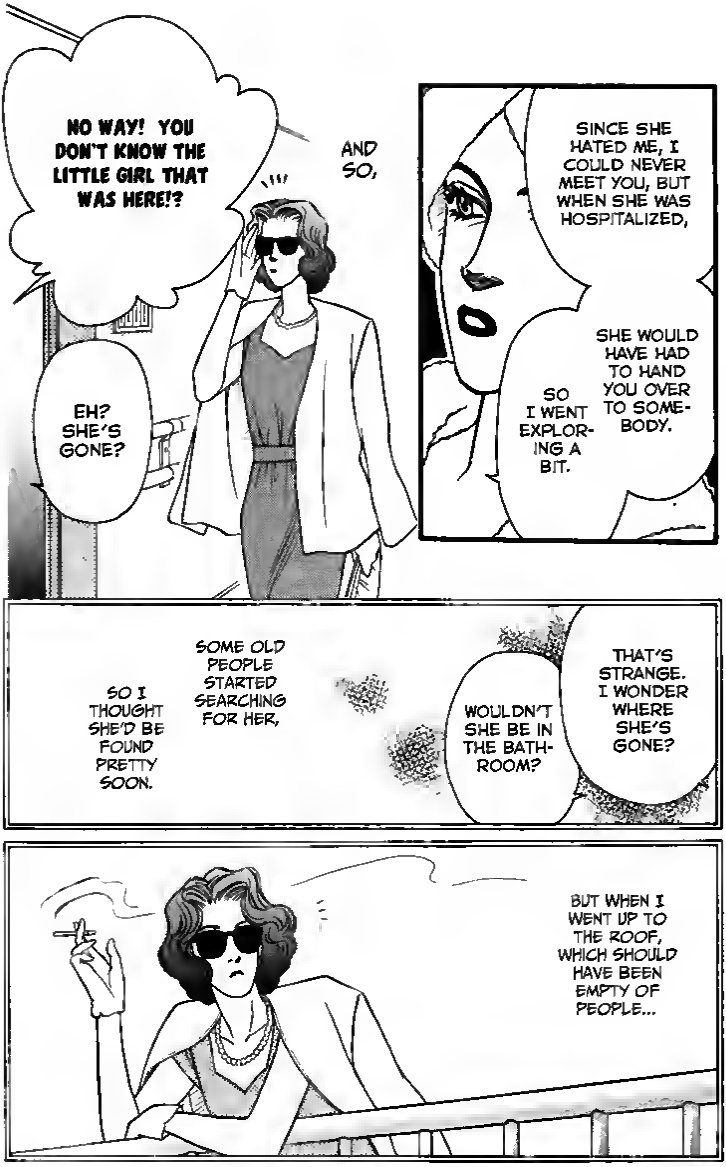
GO TO SLEEP ALREADY.
I'VE BEEN COMPLAIN-ING TO YOU EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE A FEVER.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT MAY BE THAT
I CAN BE SPOILED BY YOU.

YOU KNOW, MOTHER
Miracle?
EVEN THOUGH IT WILL BE A MIRACLE BIRTH IN OLD AGE,
THEY WON'T KNOW WHO THE FATHER IS.
WHEN THE BABY IS BORN,
THE MEDIA IS GOING TO HAVE A FIELD DAY.
I OUGHT TO MAKE SOME NOISE OF MY OWN.
IN ANY CASE, I WON'T BE WORKING FOR THE TIME BEING.

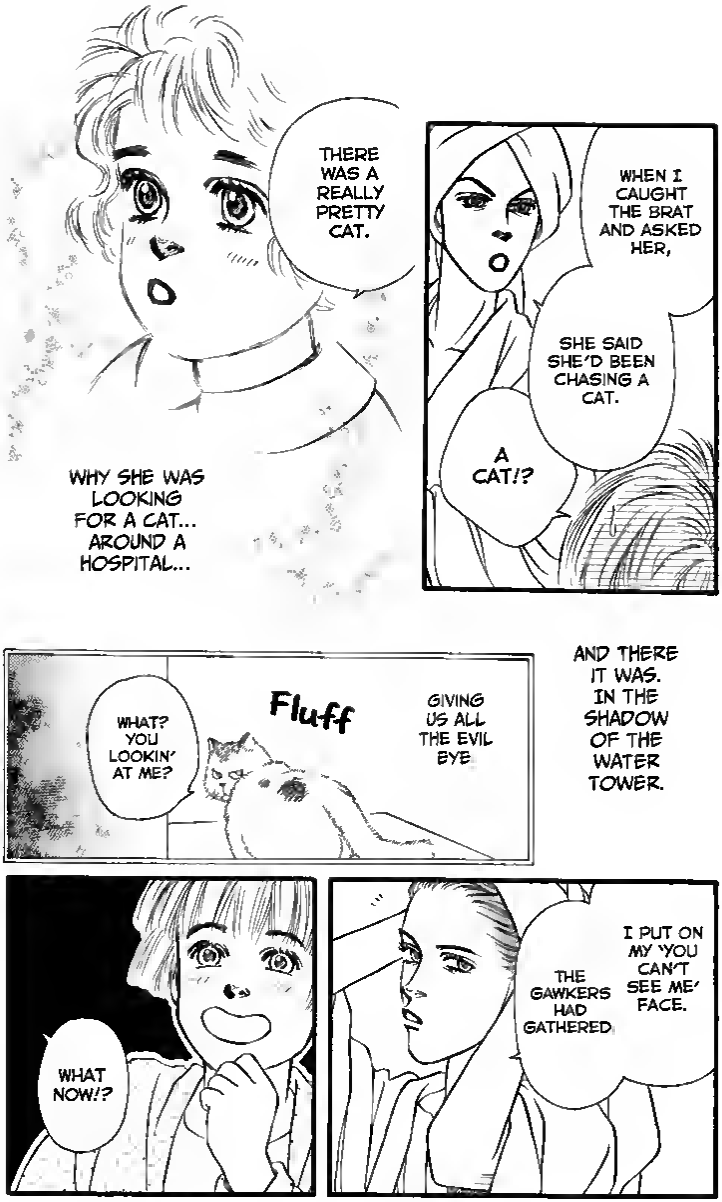

MOTHER, WHEN YOU CONCEIVE A CHILD, YOU ALWAYS GIVE BIRTH, RIGHT?
WHY IS THAT?
BECAUSE ABORTION LEAVES ONE'S BODY A SHAMBLES.
I'D RATHER GIVE BIRTH.
BUT ISN'T GIVING BIRTH A VERY DIFFICULT UNDERTAKING, AS FAR AS THE BODY IS CONCERNED?
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU DON'T LIKE KIDS AT ALL.
IF THERE'S NO OTHER WAY TO GIVE BIRTH, THEN IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
THAT'S SUCH A STRANGE PLACE TO BE IN.
THOUGH I DO HAVE SOMETHING I'VE WANTED TO ASK YOU FOR A LONG TIME NOW.
DID YOU EVER MEET ME LONG, LONG AGO?

Yuri-chan...
I DON'T REMEMBER CLEARLY BECAUSE I WAS LITTLE,
BUT SHE WAS AN AMAZINGLY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.
Aren't you Yuri-chan?
Come over here...
CAN'T YOU REMEMBER WHERE YOU WERE AT THE TIME?
EH?
I HAD THOUGHT THAT BEAUTY WAS YOU,
BUT SHE SEEMED INCREDIBLY NICE.
NOW WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT, I WONDER IF IT WAS SOMEBODY ELSE...

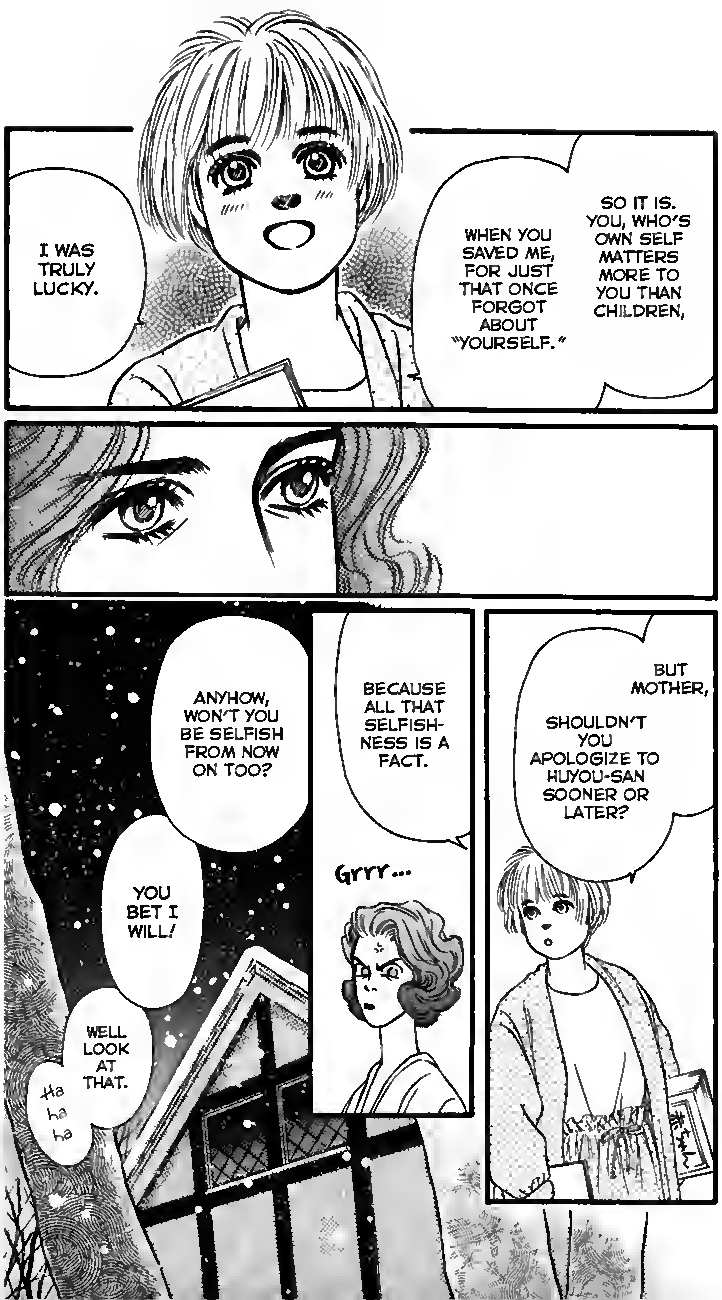
YOU WERE OUTSIDE THE FENCE ON A HOSPITAL ROOF.
Eeehh!?
ONE STEP AWAY FROM DEATH.
WHY IN A PLACE LIKE THAT!?
Whooo---
WHEN MAKURANO DIED, YOUR GRAND-MOTHER TOOK CUSTODY OF YOU.
SHE WOUND UP IN THE HOSPITAL WITH APPENDI-CITIS.


NO WAY! YOU DON'T KNOW THE LITTLE GIRL THAT WAS HERE!?
AND SO,
EH? SHE'S GONE?
SINCE SHE HATED ME, I COULD NEVER MEET YOU, BUT WHEN SHE WAS HOSPITALIZED,
SHE WOULD HAVE HAD TO HAND YOU OVER TO SOMEBODY.
SO I WENT EXPLORING A BIT.
SO I THOUGHT SHE'D BE FOUND PRETTY SOON.
SOME OLD PEOPLE STARTED SEARCHING FOR HER,
WOULDN'T SHE BE IN THE BATHROOM?
THAT'S STRANGE. I WONDER WHERE SHE'S GONE?
BUT WHEN I WENT UP TO THE ROOF, WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN EMPTY OF PEOPLE...

EEEP!
YURI-CHAN...
ARE'N'T YOU YURI-CHAN?
COME OVER HERE...


THERE WAS A REALLY PRETTY CAT.
WHEN I CAUGHT THE BRAT AND ASKED HER,
SHE SAID SHE'D BEEN CHASING A CAT.
A CAT!?
WHY SHE WAS LOOKING FOR A CAT... AROUND A HOSPITAL...
AND THERE IT WAS. IN THE SHADOW OF THE WATER TOWER.
WHAT? YOU LOOKIN' AT ME?
Fluff
GIVING US ALL THE EVIL EYE
WHAT NOW!?
I PUT ON MY 'YOU CAN'T SEE ME' FACE.
THE GAWKERS HAD GATHERED

ARE YOU SURE YOU REALLY HATE KIDS?
I HATE THEM.
IDIOT! AND IF YOU HAD STUMBLED IN SURPRISE?
IT WOULDN'T HAVE ENDED THERE!
What'd I have done had you died!?
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THAT THIS SCARY MOTHER AND THAT NICE WOMAN ARE THE SAME PERSON.
Aha.ha
Ha ha ha
WELL THEN, I CAN SEE WHY HUYOU-SAN GETS ANGRY.
YOU'VE SEEN HUYOU. DON'T YOU SEE!?
FOR ME, MY OWN SELF IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CHILDREN!
WHAT'S THAT 'HAHAHA'?
YOU'RE TALKING TO THE ONE WHO SAVED YOUR LIFE.


I WAS TRULY LUCKY.
WHEN YOU SAVED ME, FOR JUST THAT ONCE FORGOT ABOUT "YOURSELF."
SO IT IS. YOU, WHO'S OWN SELF MATTERS MORE TO YOU THAN CHILDREN,
BUT MOTHER,
SHOULDN'T YOU APOLOGIZE TO HUYOU-SAN SOONER OR LATER?
BECAUSE ALL THAT SELFISHNESS IS A FACT.
Grrr...
ANYHOW, WON'T YOU BE SELFISH FROM NOW ON TOO?
YOU BET I WILL!
WELL LOOK AT THAT.
ha ha ha

IT'S TRUE THAT EVERY-BODY
EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE SOMETHING WARM IN THEIR HEARTS,
EVEN THOUGH THEY TRULY ARE LIKE THAT...

WE HAVE A VISITOR.
SHE TOOK THE HOUSE-KEEPER TO THE CLINIC FOR A CHECKUP.
HEY, WHERE'S THE OLD BAG?
THE GUY SAID HE WAS SAKURAI MEIKO'S OLDER BROTHER.
SAKURAI MEIKO'S
OLDER BROTH-ER!?

CHAPTER 56 - SCRAMBLE - THE END